

THE ASIAN EUROPEAN BRIDGE: A STRATEGIC ESTIMATE OF TURKEY  
FOLLOWING OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

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by

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## ABSTRACT

THE ASIAN EUROPEAN BRIDGE: A STRATEGIC ESTIMATE OF TURKEY FOLLOWING OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, by Major Eugene R. Belmain, USAF, 97 pages.

Of all the consequences of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) possibly one the least expected was the stress on US-Turkish relations caused by Turkey's refusal to allow U.S. troops to traverse or operate from Turkish territory. Prior to the 1 March 2003, vote in the Turkish Parliament, the US had won approval to enhance the military facility infrastructure within Turkey with the aim of using the refurbished facilities from which to stage military operations. Furthermore, the US, to this point, consistently highlighted Turkey as its model of choice for emerging Islamic democracies. In this case, however, it was those same democratic processes, namely the popular expression of the Turkish people through their parliamentary representatives, which seemed to prevent the US from attaining its political and military objectives within the region.

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## ACRONYMS

AKP	Justice and Development Party
C2	Command and Control
C3	Command, Control, and Communication
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COA	Course of action
DOD	US Department of Defense
EEC	European Economic Council
EU	European Union
GAP	Southeast Anatolian Project
GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KDP	Democratic Party of Kurdistan
KFOR	Kosovo Peacekeeping Force
MP	Member of Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OPLAN	Operations Plan
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
RPP	Republican Peoples' Party
TAF	Turkish Armed Forces
TNSC	Turkish National Security Council

UN	United Nations
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

On February 14 [2003], President George Bush received Turkish Foreign Minister Yasar Yakis and Economy Minister Ali Babacan to personally emphasize the urgent need for Turkey to clarify the extent of its support for the United States in the seemingly imminent conflict with Iraq. Bush's unusual gesture demonstrated an acknowledgement of Turkey's strategic importance in the Iraqi equation, while raising the stakes for Turkey in the negotiations relating to the opening up of a northern front against Saddam Hussein. It is clear that Turkish decisions in the next few days will determine the future course of the US-Turkish alliance.

Bulent Aliriza, CCIS Turkey Update

#### Background

On 1 March 2003, just prior to the beginning of hostilities in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), the Turkish parliament struck down a request by the Turkish National Security Council (TNSC), only moderately endorsed by the leaders of the Turkish military, designed to allow the deployment of US forces into southeastern Turkey. US war plans, and more specifically those of US Central Command, hinged on Turkish permission for US ground troops to move into Northern Iraq through Turkish territory and, additionally, permission for the US to stage and conduct air and special forces operations into Iraq from within Turkey's borders. Following an eight-month diplomatic blitz from the US that promised over \$1 billion in aid, the Turkish parliament ultimately voted to deny the US request. Turkey's refusal prevented the US Army's 4th Infantry Division from opening a second front in Northern Iraq, effectively stopped multiple US Air Force assets from participating in OIF from their traditional Turkish bases, and forced the US to find alternate means of fixing and fighting thirteen divisions of the Iraqi Army.

Of all the consequences of OIF--many of which are still playing out today--possibly the least expected was the stress on US-Turkish relations caused by Turkey's refusal to allow US troops to traverse or base out of Turkish territory. Prior to the vote in the Turkish Parliament, the US had garnered Turkish approval to significantly enhance the military facility infrastructure within Turkey with the aim of using the newly refurbished facilities from which to stage military operations. Furthermore, the US to this point had consistently highlighted Turkey to the rest of the world as its model of choice for emerging Islamic democracies. In this case, however, it was those same democratic processes, namely the popular expression of the Turkish people through their parliamentary representatives, which seemed to prevent the US from attaining its political and military objectives within the region.

The strain on the US-Turkish relationship caused by the events of OIF raises significant questions about the strength of the two countries' strategic partnership. This thesis aims to examine the continued and future viability of the US-Turkish strategic partnership and answer the question: "Is Turkey still a key US strategic partner in the European-Asian region following Turkish refusal of permission for US military forces to traverse or conduct operations out of Turkish territory during OIF?"

### Organization

Chapter 1 contains the administrative and explanatory background information of the thesis. An explanation of the paper's methodology, namely the strategic estimate process contained within Joint Publication 3-0, is provided and briefly explained. The limitations and delimitations of the thesis body of research are also explained.

As no true strategic estimate can be accomplished without, at least, a cursory history lesson Chapter 1, beginning with the formation of the Ottoman Empire in 1056, seeks to “set the stage” and give the reader a clearer understanding of the multitude of unique factors at work in Turkey both internally and internationally. A great deal of time is spent on an examination of Turkey immediately following its creation in 1923, with special emphasis on Kemal Ataturk’s legacy of a Turkish secular state. The unique and omnipresent role of the Turkish military in the everyday lives of Turks and the governmental process is also explored. The chapter concludes with a brief examination of US-Turkish relations prior to 11 September 2001.

Chapter 2 explores Turkey in the geostrategic context and forms the basis of the strategic estimate. The chapter begins with an examination of Turkey’s geostrategic importance, offering first a brief look at Turkey’s often tumultuous internal relationship with its large Kurdish population and then an examination of its external relationships with its neighbors in the region: Greece, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Iran, the European Union (EU), Israel, Syria and Russia. Chapter 2 also highlights Turkey’s national interests both internally and internationally and continues with an explanation of Turkey’s perceived threats and emerging global opportunities. The chapter concludes with a look at Turkey’s new national security strategy and a brief examination of the United States’ interests as they pertain to the Turkish Republic and the region it dominates.

Chapter 3 explores, in depth, the background of the Turkish government’s refusal for the US to conduct combat operations out of Turkish territory during OIF. The majority of the chapter focuses on the diplomatic blitz conducted by the United States

and offers a detailed timeline of the eight months of negotiation leading up to and including the critical vote in the Turkish Parliament on 1 March 2003. The chapter continues with a look at the causal effects of the Turkish vote and seeks to answer the question why the newly elected Turkish ruling party, Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi (AKP)-- the Justice and Development Party-- and the traditionally supportive Turkish military did not enthusiastically endorse US wishes as past Turkish governments had done.

Chapter 4 analyzes the strategic options open to both the US and Turkey following the damage to their strategic partnership. Beginning with Turkey, each of the five possible options the country could pursue in regards to their international relations is explored. The chapter continues with an examination of the US areas of concern regarding Turkey and the policy implications these areas create. Finally, a likely foundation for future the US-Turkish bilateral relationship is presented.

The conclusions and recommendations of the thesis are presented in Chapter 5. Additionally, any areas affiliated with the thesis topic that require additional examination along with topics for further study and research are presented.

### Methodology

The methodology of this thesis is based on the template for strategic estimates found in Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*. According to JP 3-0,

The strategic estimate itself acts as the basis for strategy, plans, and actions that occur in response to deliberate taskings or crises. Where a subordinate commander's estimate of the situation may focus on near-term decisions and influences operation plan (OPLAN) development, the combatant commander's strategic estimate results in operational concepts and courses of action (COAs)-- broad statements of what is to be accomplished. One of the critical parts of the estimate process is defining the military end state to be achieved. (JP 3-0 2001, I-9).

The strategic estimate is the foundation for strategies, plans and actions for national policy makers, and once complete should help identify any future implications for US national security and US military strategy. JP 3-0 defines the estimate as “an analysis of a situation, development, or trend that identifies its major elements, interprets the significance, and appraises the future possibilities and the prospective results of the various actions that might be taken” (JP 3-0 2001, I-9). The estimate process itself is continuous and forms the basis for ongoing strategic, operational, and tactical analysis in an environment characterized by constant change. Strategic estimates, although constructed using the estimate process, are undertaken only after a thorough review and analysis of the strategic environment, real and or perceived threats, and national and alliance strategic direction involving the nation-state, territory, or region in question. A military combatant commander includes two additional factors in his strategic estimates that strategic policy makers normally exclude; the anticipated military operations and the types of forces available. Once completed, strategic estimates assist policy makers in developing strategies that are consistent and support national plans and policies. The strategies themselves “translate national and multinational direction into concepts to meet strategic and joint operational planning requirements” (JP 3-0 2001, I-10). Ultimately, the strategic estimate assists political and military leaders with the development of appropriate courses of action (COAs) to implement given certain situations.

#### Limitations and Delimitations

The acquisition of primary source documents from the Turkish government and my inability to read primary source documents in their original Turkish language posed

the greatest limitation on this study. There are, however, extensive writings, translated documents, and interviews on the subject, which mitigated this particular issue.

I limited the research for this subject to the period between 1991 and 2003. This timeframe covers the period when US efforts to balance commitments in the Eurasian region, namely between the Kurds and Turks, reinforced the suspicions of the Turkish government and its military powers, to September 2003, a date six months after Turkey's refusal to allow the US to use Turkish territory for OIF operations.

### Strategic Context

Turkey is truly a land of contrast--both geographical and ethnic. Approximately the size of Texas, Turkey has coastlines along the Mediterranean, Aegean, and Black Seas with coastal plains surrounding the agriculturally rich Anatolia heartland, a region key to Turkey's foreign policy and national security strategy (fig. 1). Turkey, and more specifically Turkey's valuable Anatolia region, lies in the center of historic invasion routes, provides land and sea routes for Middle East and Caspian oil, and controls the water flow from the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers to points south. Anatolia is framed with rugged mountains to the east, and to the north and south by the seas with parallel mountain ranges, forest, and rivers. Regardless of politics or ethnic tensions, these natural barriers enhance Turkey's defenses and have forced Turkey, both historically and today, to look west for trade and security alliances (Aydin 1999, 9).

Turkey is a diverse nation whose population of 67.5 million is 98 percent Sunni Muslim, with Greek Orthodox Christians, Jews, and Armenians listed as significant minorities under the constitution. A smaller number of Muslims from the Alevi branch of Islam are also present. The Kurdish ethnic minority totals approximately twelve million

of the population. The official state language, as mandated by constitutional law, is Turkish, but Kurdish and Arabic are spoken in most rural mountainous areas (US Department of State 2003, 1-3).



Figure 1. Turkey

Source: Department of State 2003, 1.

### Religious and Ethnic Overview

Modern Turkey traces its roots to 1055, when Seljuk Turks and Turkoman warriors marched into Persia and forced the Baghdad Caliph to recognize their nomadic tribe as the protectors of Sunni Islam (Mayall 1997, 7). Their Sultan leader subsequently led a military expedition into Eastern Anatolia in 1071 and won a campaign against the Greek Byzantines. This campaign established Islam in central Asia, and eventually gave birth to the Ottoman Empire. Osman, a Turkoman tribal leader, established the empire in 1299, embarking on military adventures throughout the region, systematically



subjugating the Byzantine culture, and establishing a dynasty that incorporated the Balkans, Iraq, and the Mediterranean region, including fringes of northern Africa, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia (Mayall 1997, 7).

The next five centuries of the Ottoman Empire were characterized by constant war as European Christians fought to block the Empire's advances and Muslim influences from the East. The brutality of the Christian crusaders during these campaigns instilled much of the animosity and fueled much of the militant Islamic fundamentalism still seen today throughout the world. Furthermore, rather than uniting the Catholic and Orthodox Christians, the crusaders viciously attacked any village or enclave that did not practice Western Catholicism, thus driving a permanent wedge between the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches (Pope 1997, 37-38).

In the fifteenth century the Ottoman Empire overran mainland Greece and most of the Greek Islands, initiating almost 300 years of Muslim occupation (fig.2) (Metz 1995, 19). Although Ottoman rule, especially in the early years, was less brutal than has often been made out, it was certainly harsh, involving high taxation and occasional acts of appalling violence--30,000 Greeks were massacred when the Ottomans captured Cyprus in 1571 (Kinzer 2001, 4).

The Ottoman occupation, which ended with the Greek War of Independence of 1821-1828, had a profound effect on the Greek people, engendering a sense of hatred and distrust of Turks that has lasted to this day. Turkish opinion, too, has been marked by the brutalities of history. The Greek War of Independence started with numerous massacres of Turkish civilians, most infamously at Tripolista in 1821, where 12,000 Turks died (the Turks responded by slaughtering 25,000 Greeks on the island of Chios) (Kinzer 2001,

203). As will be discussed later, the entire modern Turkish state is, in a sense, based on anti-Greek sentiment, since Mustafa Ataturk first came to power after repelling the 1919-21 Greek invasion of Asia Minor.

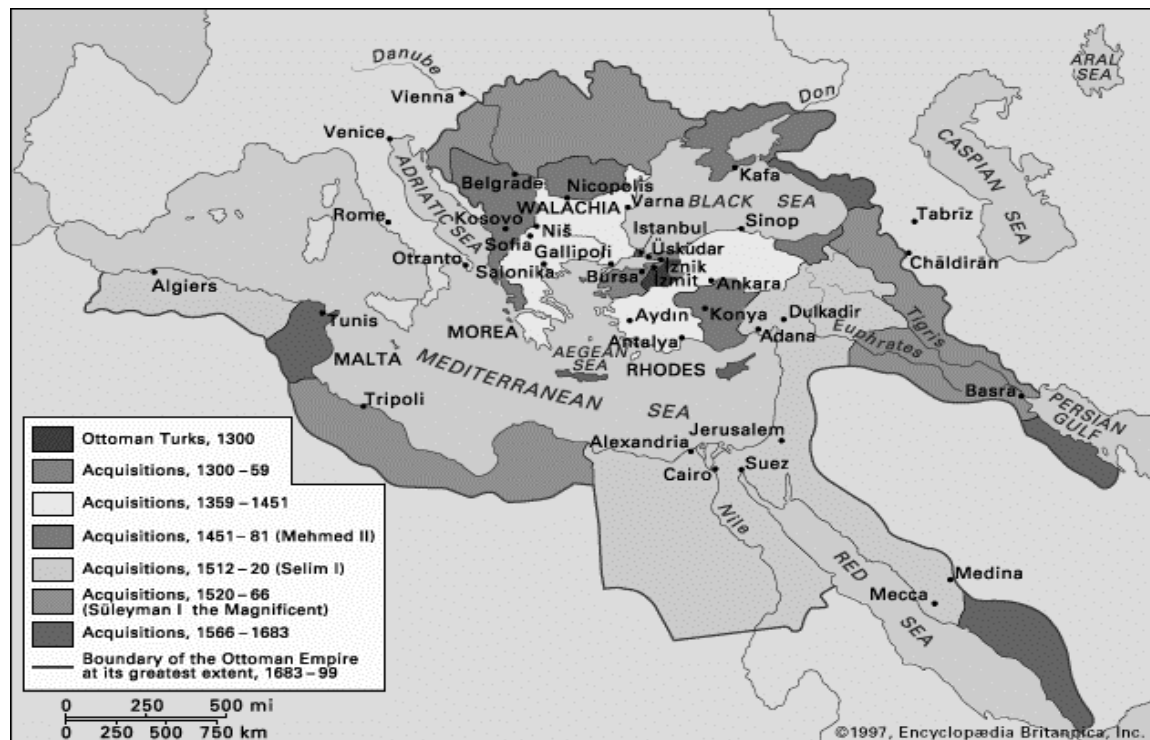


Figure 2. The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1699

Source: *Encyclopædia Britannica* 1997.

Religious and ethnic differences with and within the Ottoman Empire intensified during the eighteenth century as Christians sought further autonomy and independence. Russia was growing stronger and began to exercise sovereignty over fringes of the Ottoman territory occupied by a Christian majority. Interestingly, during this period, Greek and Armenian merchants in the empire were treated favorably, lived well, and were protected under Ottoman law, which conceded special autonomy to them out of

economic and trade interests (Kinzer 2001, 203). Problems intensified, however, as more and more Christians demanded similar levels of autonomy and the Greek and Armenian areas of Anatolia sought independence from the Empire. These moves were viewed by the Muslim Ottomans as rebellion and were quickly and violently suppressed. Matters worsened in 1881 when economic problems and failure of the Turkish government to pay its foreign debts resulted in European control of the empire's finances through the establishment of a Public Debt Administration (Aydin 1999, 7-8).

The Christians took advantage of this period under European control and forced the 'sick man of Europe,' as Turkey was now known, to concede and amend the constitution, giving equal rights to minorities. Fearing further European encroachment and loss of sovereignty in Anatolia, the Turks initiated brutal confrontations against Armenian nationalists with the Kurdish Hamidiye Regiment, eventually resulting in the deaths of 20,000 Armenians (Pope 1999, 40-43). The hatred intensified during the First World War when the Armenian Church announced its loyalty to Russia. Armenian militias melted into the rough mountainous terrain and conducted guerrilla warfare against Ottoman forces. An Ottoman campaign in 1915 to counter the Armenian militia resulted in the forced migration and massacre of thousands of Armenians. Entire villages were seized, and children and women were taken into Kurdish tribes against their will. Historical accounts vary, but Armenian deaths are estimated as high as 800,000, with the Armenian militia responsible for 40,000 Muslim deaths (Pope 1999, 40-43).

Many of the roots of modern-day Turkey's religious and ethnic problems are traceable to the 1920 Treaty of Sevres, which was imposed on the Ottoman government following its defeat in World War I. The Treaty organized the Ottoman territory along

ethnic, versus geographic, lines, causing significant internal conflicts (Goodwin 1999, 318-319). However, it was the Greek invasion of Turkey (1919-1921) that fueled the passion of nationalism under the leadership of General Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasa “Ataturk,” and, at least briefly, rallied the majority of the population around Ataturk’s stated goal of a multiethnic state of Anatolia (Kinross 1985, 165). Even the Kurds chose to support Ataturk and fought against the Greeks despite the fact they were given more favorable conditions under the Treaty of Sevres—the Treaty had carved out a separate and self-ruling Kurdish territory in the southeast mountainous region of Turkey and the Mosul Province for the Kurdish people. Unfortunately, for the Kurds, they believed by fighting for Ataturk they would be granted the benefit of autonomy they enjoyed under Ottoman rule. In the end, the strong sense of nationalism by all “Turks” was instrumental in winning the war of independence against the Greeks and establishing a new republic under the Treaty of Lausanne on 24 July 1923 (Ergil 2000, 1-2).

The Treaty of Lausanne granted the new Turkish state complete sovereignty over the territory that makes up today’s modern Turkish Republic. Greek and Turkish delegates to the peace talks agreed to a border in Thrace, and also to the continued British occupation of Mosul Province in Northern Iraq until the League of Nations decided on the territory’s rightful owners (Kinross 1985, 358). It was also agreed that Alexandretta would remain with French Syria, and the Aegean Islands with Greece and Italy. Anatolia and Eastern Thrace were conceded to Turkey’s sovereignty. A glaring oversight was the lack of designated territory for the Armenians or Kurds who had fought for Turkey. Instead, Turkey agreed to a stipulation in the treaty that it would protect its citizens, to include all minorities regardless of race or religion (Pope 2000, 46-47). The Kurds,

however, were never listed as a minority, and to this day are still not exempt from the Turkish government's secular laws, as are the Greek Orthodox, Jews, and Armenians (Gunter 1997, 157).

The Treaty of Lausanne also stipulated a forced exchange between Greeks in Anatolia and Turkish Muslims in Greece. Only those Greeks in Istanbul and Muslims in northeastern Greece, referred to as Western Thrace, were allowed to maintain their residency. There is historical speculation that the Turkish expulsion of Armenians and Greeks was a strategy to ethnically segregate Anatolia for Muslim Turks. The animosity from this action still exists today in the form of strong Armenians and other Christian movements who lobby in the US and in Europe against the Turkish government for war crimes and for compensation for property seized during World War I (Pope 1997, 46-47).

#### Turkey--From 1923 to the Present

The Republic of Turkey was formally recognized on 29 October 1923, and with its creation Mustafa Kemal, the Turkish hero of World War I and the war with Greece, who would later come to be known as Ataturk or "father of the Turks," realized a dream (Basimevi 1981, 19). The creation of the Republic marked the culmination of the collapse of the 600-year old Ottoman Empire, which, at its peak, controlled vast areas of northern Africa, southeastern Europe and western Asia, but which had failed to keep pace with the enormous social and technological developments occurring in Europe during that period. Ataturk was unanimously elected as the first President of the Republic (Kinross 1985, 381). He appointed Ysmet Ynonu as the first Prime Minister and four months later, the Caliphate and Sultanate--or the religious and temporal ruling institutions of the old empire--were abolished (Kinross 1985, 385). Both institutions were deemed incompatible

with the republicanism of Ataturk's secular vision for Turkey and were thus eliminated. Additionally, all remaining members of the Ottoman Dynasty were expatriated to eliminate the possibility of them stifling Ataturk's reforms (Kinross 1985, 385-386).

Ataturk believed that the separation of religious and state affairs and the provision of individual religious freedom were prerequisites for the forming of a modern society and thus instituted what he called a "principle of secularity." Prior to his death in 1938, Ataturk focused on "Westernizing" the empire's Turkish core, Anatolia, and a small part of Thrace. Referred to as "Kemalism," Ataturk's ideology comprised secularism, nationalism, and modernization and turned towards the West for inspiration and support (Kinross 1985, 385). After abolishing the Caliphate, Ataturk instituted a series of radical reforms in the institutions and policies formally based on Caliphate law. The Chairmanship of Religious Affairs and the Directorate of Foundations replaced the Ministries of Shariah and Foundations, both connected to and controlled by the Prime Ministry. The religious school order was abolished on 3 March 1924, with all schools and educational institutions ordered under the Ministry of National Education (Kinross 1985, 386-387). The Shariah Courts were replaced by a secular court system based on the Western judicial organizational law standard, and even the wearing of the turban and fez, both symbols of the former empire and, to this point, traditional symbols of class, rank and religious differences, were banned. The international hour and calendar systems were adopted; dervish lodges and the titles of tariqahs sects were abolished; and a Western model Turkish Civil code, to replace the old civil code formally based on Shariah Law, was adopted. The Turkish Civil Code made it necessary to secularize all legislation and rewrite the Turkish Criminal and Commercial Codes to bring them in line with

contemporary Western standards. Perhaps of greatest significance, an amendment to the Turkish Constitution in 1928 removed the clause that stated the official state religion of Turkey as Islam (Yavuz 2000, 33-34).

Turkey entered World War II on the side of the Allies shortly before the war ended in 1945 and became a charter member of the United Nations following that institution's creation. Demands by the Soviet Union for military bases in the Turkish Straits, combined with difficulties faced by Greece in quelling a communist rebellion, acted as the impetus for the United States to announce the Truman Doctrine to the rest of the world, more specifically the Soviet Union, in 1947 (Gunter 1993, 117). The doctrine enunciated American intentions to guarantee the security of Turkey and Greece, and resulted in large-scale US military and economic aid to both countries. After participating with United Nations forces in the Korean conflict, Turkey joined NATO in 1952 (Kinzer 2001, 159).

### The Turkish Military

The Turkish military assumed the role of guarantor of Ataturk's vision of a secular state and continues to the present day to act in that capacity. The Turkish officer corps believes that, "only under an Atatürkian State can one safeguard Western values and contribute to the consolidation of democracy" (Karaosmanoglu 1994, 28). This, in turn, leads to the conviction that "the task of the [Turkish] Armed Forces is to protect the State and the democratic regime not only against external threats but also against its internal enemies" (Karaosmanoglu 1994, 28). As the self-appointed guardian of the constitution, the military has periodically felt compelled to intervene in Turkey's otherwise democratic process to ensure the Republic remains secular. Although

competent and professional, the military is not subordinate to civilian leadership and has led four coups since 1960 to defeat what it considered domestic national security threats (Yavuz 2000, 34-35). With a deep commitment and loyalty to Ataturk's vision and Kemalism in general, Turkish military officers traditionally equate Islam with irrationality and believe religious opposition to Turkey's secular democracy poses the greatest danger to the state (Mayall 1997, 33). The military's responsibility is based on Article 35 of the Internal Service Act, which directs the military to protect the Turkish Fatherland--the Republic of Turkey as defined by the constitution--so it remains a secular republic (Heper and Guney, 2000, 1-2). A recent example of the military's influence on civilian leadership is seen in the pressure applied against the Islam-oriented Refah Welfare Party from 1996 to 1998. Under the military's encouragement through the TNSC, the Turkish Constitutional Court ordered the disbanding of the Party in January 1998 because of its attempt to once again establish Turkey as an Islamic state (Heper and Guney 2000, 6-8).

The power of the Turkish military is normally wielded with the greatest effect in the TNSC. Comprised of the prime minister, the chief of the General Staff, the ministers of national defense, interior, and foreign affairs, and the commanders of the branches of the armed forces and gendarmerie, the TNSC sets national security policy and coordinates all activities related to mobilization and defense (Metz 1995, 247). It is only recently that the power of the TNSC has lessened with increased civilian control of the council.

It is within this complex historical and contemporary context that the US attempts to diplomatically, economically, and militarily navigate. To their credit, US



policymakers, corporate leaders, and military officers fared relatively well in their relations for much of the Republic of Turkey's existence. However, the international environment, along with multiple internal Turkish factors, was different when the US requested Turkish support prior to OIF, and these differences caught the US by surprise.

### Relations Prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom

On 1 March 1999, President Clinton spoke to the Turkish Parliament in Ankara and formally announced the existence of a “strategic partnership” between the US and Turkey. If the succinct definition of the meaning of these two words were used, it would be possible to characterize the term “strategic partnership” as expressing, at several levels, the bilateral inter-state relationship. Firstly, a strategic relationship implies robust and friendly relations at the top political levels which are usually institutionalized in one or another form. Secondly, the strategic relationship indicates intensive cooperation in the spheres of the highest strategic importance for both countries, first and foremost, in the political-military, and regional security area. Finally, at the third level, countries engaged in a strategic relationship see transference of robust and friendly political relations to a lower, public level, indicating dynamic and mutually beneficial economic relations, intensive cultural exchange, and cooperation at the various levels society all the way down to individuals. Such a definition of “strategic partnership” relationship, however formal it may be, shows that the development of this relationship, and its intensity, at the various levels mentioned above, neither is, nor can be, uniform; that it depends, in the broadest sense, on each countries' resources and on their respective influence in the international environment.

In the months before OIF, cooperation between the US and Turkey concerning matters in the Middle East was good. The Bush administration was content with the Turkish-American strategic partnership and with Turkey's participation in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Previous US administrations had secured robust foreign military sales contracts and had a strong rapport with the Evren and Özal governments (1980-91), culminating in the latter's open support of the US in Operation Desert Shield/Storm. In short, senior US policy makers felt they understood their Turkish political and military counterparts' interests and intentions (Parris 2003, 4).

Similarly during this period, Turkey seemed satisfied with the US-Turkish relationship. Senior Turkish military leaders continued encouraging active participation of Turkish forces in UN peacekeeping missions in both Somalia and the Balkans, and in early 2002, under significant urging from the US, offered Turkish forces to lead the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 7). Furthermore, General Hilmi Özkök, a Turkish general officer with long-time ties to the US and NATO, was elected Chief of the General Staff, Turkish Armed Forces, seemingly furthering the positive cooperative attitude with the US (Salmoni 2003, 1). With a final factor--the assumption of power by the seemingly pro-Western AKP--the political-military relationship between the US and Turkey looked exceedingly rosy, especially since the AKP represented the combination of Islam and democracy the US had highlighted as the socio-political benchmark it sought for emerging Islamic democracies. And yet ultimately, the AKP-controlled parliament voted not to support the US OIF request.

What is to become of the US-Turkish relationship? What is the most probable COA the US will take concerning Turkey? What is the most dangerous COA that the US could expect in Turkey? How does a global hegemon, like the US, respond to a seemingly ungrateful ally? A strategic estimate should further the ability to answer each of these questions.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE STRATEGIC ESTIMATE

#### Turkey's Geostrategic Importance

The socio-political construct in Turkey within which the US attempts to operate is exceedingly complex. Turkey emerged from WWII as one of the most strategically important nations in the world, and its geopolitical and geostrategic location helped the United States through the Cold War and more recently supported the largest US troop rotation, in support of OIF, in United States' history. Turkey has been referred to as a "pivot state par excellence" (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 2). Turkey qualifies for this classification given its population, location, economic and military potential and, above all, its capacity to affect regional and international stability (Chace, Hill, and Kennedy 1996, 33-51).

Straddling Asia and Europe, Turkey is surrounded by potential and realized adversaries. Turkey's neighborhood includes Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia, Armenia, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Although periodically confused whether to look to the east or west for alliance, Turkey has consistently remained loyal to the United States, and to its NATO allies. Today, the United States cannot begin to address regional problems from Europe to the Middle East without involvement and support from Turkey and its far-reaching influence (Larrabee 2003, 1).

Turkey's influence, however, goes far beyond its immediate neighbors. Through its ethnic and religious diversity and the enduring legacy of its Ottoman roots, Turkey has developed ties with Muslims in Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Balkans, and the Middle East. As the world's only country with a 99 percent Muslim population and a secular,

democratic, and successfully consolidated state order, Turkey is the US template for future Muslim states (Gunduz 2003, 50). The Turks have provided military and police forces to all UN and NATO peacekeeping operations in the Balkans and, at the request of the US government, trained and equipped the Bosnian Croat Army.

It is within this historical context that modern Turkey emerged as a strong and independent nation formed around Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's secular nationalism. Ataturk's vision of world peace also served as the cornerstone of Turkey's strategic role during the Cold War. After joining NATO in 1952, Turkey proceeded to develop the second most powerful military in the alliance. Throughout the Cold War, Turkey anchored the southern flank of NATO and controlled the strategic Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 1). Turkey served as an invaluable strategic partner to the entire free world, and today continues to promote world peace through participation in UN and NATO peacekeeping missions. Unfortunately, Turkey is also the victim of internal problems and restraints that emerged since the end of the Cold War, which, thus far, have thwarted its ability to adapt and compete in the new European world order.

### The Kurdish Situation

The Kurds historically served as faithful Turkish citizens during both peace and war and were even granted autonomy by the leadership of the Ottoman Empire in exchange for their loyalty and warrior skills. It was this sense of loyalty and warrior spirit of the Kurds that helped Ataturk win Turkey's independence in 1922. Historians are unsure why Ataturk abandoned his original goals of a multicultural and pluralistic society, but there were many factors that shaped events during this period, such as the

exchange of Muslims and non-Muslims between Turkey and Greece and the stipulation of what constituted minorities in the constitution. The intellectual elite had decided to name Turkey after the geographical region for all Turkish people, fearing that acknowledging specific ethnic groups would undermine the state while it was still in its infancy. There is also speculation that the Kurds may have lost their autonomy when Turkey lost the province of Mosul in Northern Iraq, which served as a Kurdish enclave for centuries (Ergil 2000, 1-2). From 1925 to 1939, there were three major revolts by the Turkish Kurds. All were completely crushed by the vastly superior Turkish military and from that point on the Turkish Kurds were, until the 1970s, mostly subdued. A CIA assessment of the situation stated, "In the early days of the Turkish Republic, the government responded to Kurdish protests against Ataturk's modernizing and centralizing reforms by ruthlessly suppressing all anti-governmental activity and by attempting, albeit unsuccessfully, to eliminate all manifestations of Kurdish culture and nationalism" (Gunter 1993, 13). Today, the Mosul area and adjacent southeastern Turkish region both continue to serve as Kurdish strongholds and as a basis for provoking the Turkish government.

On 27 November 1974, during a decade of increasing political violence in Turkey, an ethnic Kurd, Abdullah Ocalan, formed the Partia Karkaren Kurdistan--Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK)--around a Marxist-Leninist ideology with the goal of seceding from the Turkish Republic and creating a separate Kurdish state. Ocalan's group was "the only organization whose members were drawn almost exclusively from the lowest social classes--the uprooted, half-educated village and small-town youth who knew what it felt like to be oppressed and who wanted action, not ideological

sophistication” (Gunter 1993, 58). The Kurdish rebellion and insurgency took root in 1980 following the Turkish government’s decision to implement a harsh cultural policy and intense campaign to assimilate the Kurds including an edict banning Kurds from speaking their own language. Names of Kurdish villages and towns were changed and Kurdish parents were required by the new law to rename their children.

The Kurdisan revolution to which the PKK aspired had two aspects: first, the establishment of an independent Kurdistan; and second, the clearing away of the class structured society “left over from the Middle Ages” replacing it with a “classless” socialist society (Gunter 1993, 60). The PKK embarked on a series of localized armed actions of assassination and terrorism against local leaders from 1978 to 1981, using bank robberies, arms and drug smuggling to finance their actions. Following almost fifteen years of ever-increasing political violence, the Turkish military cracked down on all separatist groups in the country including the PKK, imprisoning over 20,000 suspected militants and forcing Ocalan to Syria where he remained until his capture in 1999 (Gunter 1993, 67).

In 1984, the PKK initiated a renewed guerilla offensive against the Turkish government. The Turkish leaders in response began a campaign against the Kurds that involved deploying security forces to Kurdish regions, establishing militias in those areas, and declaring martial law. The death count on both sides from the conflict continued to rise over the course of the next fifteen years (Ergil 2000, 2-3).

As the conflict between the Turkish government and its Kurdish citizens intensified, so did the reports of human rights abuses by both sides. Between 1980 and 2000, more than 400 Kurdish prisoners died, apparently as a result of torture, in the hands

of Turkish police or gendarmes (that is, soldiers who carry out police duties in the countryside complementary to the police within city and town boundaries) (Ergil 2000, 2-4). Security forces emptied large areas of the countryside in the southeast by bombing and burning unarmed peasant settlements. Hundreds of thousands are still displaced. In the early 1990s the Turkish security forces are believed to have sponsored networks of killers to eliminate hundreds of suspected enemies of the state by gunning them down in the street or making them “disappear.” In the course of the conflict, the PKK also massacred hundreds of civilians and executed prisoners (Ergil 2000, 3).

In 1991, the Turkish government launched an air attack on suspected bases in northern Iraq. The result was the death of many innocent Iraqi Kurds and other civilians. Offensives in Iraq by Turkish forces contributed to efforts by Iraqi Kurds to push the PKK out of its territory. The PKK, in turn, stepped up its attacks on Turkish resorts and in central Istanbul and on Turkish missions and interests throughout Europe (Ergil 2000, 5).

Although the PKK is a terrorist organization and a threat to Turkish national security, most analysts agree the Turkish government overreacted and made the mistake of alienating Kurds and non-Kurds alike through human rights abuses of innocent citizens. Routinely, a PKK attack or threat was met with an overwhelming government response of military, police, and helicopter gunships. A 1996 US State Department report indicated that Turkish government forces had forced the evacuation of 2,297 Kurdish villages and migration of two million Kurds from their homes (Ergil 2000, 3). Alleged casualties from the counterinsurgency are estimated at 30,000, with a quarter of this figure being innocent civilians caught in cross fires or tortured for suspected PKK



activity. Reports also indicate an additional 10,000 civilians were mysteriously killed for passive support of the PKK.

Today, the Turkish government has control of the Southeast Kurdish area, and the capture and extradition of Ocalan has effectively ended the PKK insurgency for the time being. However, the problems with the Kurdish situation and the inherent human rights violations that result continue to plague the Turkish government and its aims, namely its highly sought after membership in the EU.

In negotiating terms for allowing US troops access to Northern Iraq via Turkey, the Turkish government not only looked for compensation for loss of trade and tourism income, it tried to obtain assurances about the future of the Kurdish-run enclave in Northern Iraq. The Turkish government believed that if Iraqi Kurdish forces captured the oil-rich city of Kirkuk, then the Iraqi Kurds would have the financial independence to establish a separate Kurdish state. To emphasize this point, on 21 February 2003 Turkish Foreign Minister Yasar Yakis said, “At present the Kurdish area enjoys a certain autonomy.... We do not want this to be consolidated further and to be transformed into a federal state or an independent state” (Ornarli 2003, 5).

The Turkish government opposes this consolidation on the grounds that it might provide a model that would encourage Kurdish separatism within Turkey as well. Foreign Minister Yakis went on to indicate that Turkey would field more troops than the US in Northern Iraq and that Turkish troops would be prepared to go into combat to prevent Kurdish forces seizing Kirkuk and the oil fields around it. In fact, Turkish forces are still present in large numbers in the Kurdish-held enclave in Northern Iraq. Since 1997 an estimated 5,000 Turkish soldiers have occupied a fifteen-kilometer-deep strip along

Turkey's border with Iraq. The Turkish Army provides officers for a peacekeeping force between territories held by the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). Along the border strip Turkish forces established camps into which they planned to channel possible mass flows of Iraqi civilians fleeing the conflict, in order to prevent them crossing into Turkey (Ornarli 2003, 5). A much larger Turkish force was massed on the Turkish side of the frontier with Northern Iraq, and, according to the 24 February 2002 issue of *Newsweek*, there were plans to deploy 60,000 to 80,000 Turkish troops up to 170 miles into Northern Iraq if Kurdish forces attempted to annex oil-rich Kirkuk. If such a deployment of Turkish troops were to provoke armed resistance from KDP and PUK forces, the resulting conflict could be protracted.

The political and military situation in Northern Iraq differs significantly from that in southeastern Turkey, but their human geography, consisting of large villages scattered through rugged mountains, are similar. Human rights organizations are concerned that the Turkish armed forces deployed in Northern Iraq might use the same methods they employed in southeastern Turkey between 1984 and 1999 during bitter conflict with the PKK. Certainly, the rationale for possible Turkish intervention in Northern Iraq is the same as that which drove the conflict with the PKK: combating Kurdish separatism. Moreover, Northern Iraq's anomalous status (technically part of Iraq proper but granted de facto autonomy under at least two separate political authorities) means that Turkish forces operating there would face limited administrative or judicial scrutiny to constrain their conduct. During a two-decade campaign against separatism inside Turkey's borders, state forces are suspected of having committed grave and widespread human rights

violations. It is estimated that the security forces detained thousands of citizens for interrogation under torture (Gunter 2003, 90).

After Turkish forces captured PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999, the PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire, but it retains bases in Northern Iraq. In the intervening years the Turkish government enacted significant reforms, and the growing stability brought about a striking improvement in the general human rights picture. In the Southeast the security situation has improved dramatically and it is unlikely that the PKK will be able to reconstitute itself to carry out operations on the scale of the early 1990s. It is estimated that only 5,000 to 10,000 PKK militants remain in Turkey, Northern Iraq, and inside Iran's border with Turkey and with rare exceptions, the PKK has not been actively involved in urban terrorism inside Turkey for several years (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 39). Against this backdrop, many viewed the possibility of large-scale Turkish incursion into Iraq with trepidation fearing that scenes from southeastern Turkey during the 1990s would be replayed in Northern Iraq disturbing the relative calm seen in the last few years.

### Greece

Relations between Greece and Turkey have improved somewhat; however, distrust and animosity still prevail over the Greek invasion in 1919 and issues regarding Cyprus. Today, Greece continues to threaten Turkey's lines of communications with a military buildup in Cyprus in support of the Greek majority and by claims of airspace and territorial waters surrounding the Aegean Islands. Additionally, the Greeks are developing economic and military alliances with Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan

against the Turks, which threaten to inhibit the chances for peace and stability between the two countries (Aras 2002, 27).

The last military confrontation between Greece and Turkey was in 1974, when, in reaction to a coup by right-wing Greek Cypriots, which was thought to threaten the island's Turkish minority, Turkish troops invaded. Within days, the Turks had seized the northern forty percent of the country and engaged in ethnic cleansing against the ethnic Greek population, killing as many as two thousand civilians (Zunes 1999, 2). The United Nations Security Council condemned the invasion and called for Turkey's immediate withdrawal. Turkish forces remain today in the northern minority enclave, and Greece has maintained tensions by the recent deployment of missiles and modernization of the Cypriot military (Sussman 2001, 2). Greek initiatives regarding Aegean waters and the continental shelf could have major security and economic consequences on Turkey with Greece attempting to extend its sovereign waters around each island from six to twelve miles, as allowed by the Law of Seas Treaty, and seeking to claim the continental shelf around each Aegean Island. Turkey refuses to recognize the treaty, and claims half of the continental shelf for purposes of oil exploration (Schaffenberger 1991, 15-17). Other than the danger of a confrontation by increased military buildup on Cyprus, these disputes are being handled in the diplomatic arena. Greece does hold a trump card by having veto power over Turkey's membership in the EU.

#### Azerbaijan and Georgia

Turkey has been extremely close politically to the Muslim-Turkic state of Azerbaijan since that nation gained its independence from the former Soviet Union. The two countries are linked by strong historical, cultural, and linguistic ties with growing

economic, political, and military relations the result. Since 1996, Turkey has been actively engaged in the training of Azerbaijan's military officers; it has also helped to modernize the Azerbaijani military education system to bring it in line with NATO standards and an Azerbaijani peacekeeping platoon has been participating in the Kosovo Peacekeeping Force (KFOR) as part of the Turkish battalion (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 105).

Economically, Turkey is hoping to capitalize on huge oil and natural gas resources that have the potential to bring Azerbaijan \$1 billion annually. However, geopolitical constraints by Russia over Azerbaijan's neighbors, Georgia and Armenia, are working to spoil the lucrative \$500 million transit fees, as well as deprive Turkey of badly needed energy resources. For their part, Russia desires any pipeline in the region to run north to the Port of Sopsa in Georgia, where the oil would then ship out through the Bosphorus (Mayall 1997, 99-100). Negotiators are currently attempting to strike a deal involving a western route pipeline that would originate in Baku, then extend northwest through T'bilisi Georgia, and then flow out through Ceyhan, Turkey on the Mediterranean (US Energy Information Administration, 2000, 2). On 10 February 2001, Chevron Oil Company entered into negotiations with British Petroleum to construct the pipeline, with possible branch plans to carry oil from the rich Tengiz fields in Kazakhstan. Construction, which was slated to begin in 2002 at a projected cost of \$2.5 billion, is still awaiting commencement. The completion of the pipeline will prove a huge boon to Turkish industry, which to this point has been somewhat limited in development because of the difficulty getting oil (Frantz 2001, 7).

Turkey has also sought to strengthen ties to Georgia. In March 1997, the two countries signed an agreement on military assistance and cooperation that outlined the construction of joint military training centers in Georgia including a large firing range outside of Tbilisi (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 105). Turkey assisted Georgia with the reconstruction of some of its military facilities and Georgian military personnel have been studying in Turkey since 1998 (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 106).

### Armenia

Turkish-Armenian relations remain strained by the legacy of the massacre of Armenians by Ottoman forces in 1915-1916 (Henze 1996, 27). Armenia has made positive diplomatic gestures toward Turkey over the last few years; however, a strong Russian influence, tensions with Azerbaijan over secessionist efforts of the Armenian enclave in Nagorno-Karabakh and the historical animosity will most likely prevent near term economic ties or pipeline negotiations.

Armenia's occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh has not only strained their relations with Azerbaijan but also complicated Turkish-Armenian relations. Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize the independent Armenia after the collapse of the Soviet Union but the increasing intensity of the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh in the early 1990s resulted in Turkey closing its border with Armenia and suspending efforts to develop diplomatic ties (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 106). Turkey contemplated providing military assistance to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in 1993, but calculated this action would bring war with Armenia and possibly draw a Russian military response. Today, the Turkish border with Armenia remains closed (Mayall 1997, 60-61).

## Iran

While Iran has always served as an important trading partner with Turkey, both nations remain suspicious of each other. Turkey suspects Iran supports the PKK and Iran accuses Turkey of supporting the Iranian-Azerbaijan separatist movement. Both nations, however, would benefit from a gas-oil pipeline project, originally negotiated in 1996 by ousted Prime Minister Erbakan of the Islamic Refah Party (Chace, Hill and Kennedy 1999, 95-99). The project would bring oil to Turkey more cheaply than the Azerbaijan project and would lessen Turkey's vulnerability to Russian influence. The major roadblock to the deal is Turkey's reluctance to violate US sanctions against Iran and the Turkish government's fear of establishing too close relations with an openly militant Islamic state.

Iran is, however, a potential rival to Turkey for influence in Central Asia and the Caucasus. To date, Iran's policy toward the region has been driven by geopolitical vice ideological--such as the promotion of Islam--considerations (Shaffer 2001, 2). For Iran to become a major influence in the region, at least in the near future, there would need to be a significant thawing of US-Iranian relations--an unlikely immediate prospect (Shaffer 2001, 2).

## The European Union

Turkey considers membership in the EU as a vital economic interest. The EU is making membership difficult however, based, at least in part, on documented human rights abuses caused mainly by the Turkish government's campaign against the PKK. The Turks' perception is that the EU decision is based on ethnic and religious grounds and views the EU as a 'Christian Club.' The Turks also believe they should be rewarded

by Europe for services rendered during the Cold War by protecting Europe's southern flank against Soviet aggression with the second largest NATO force. The bottom line is that Turkey believes Europe owes it a debt, and that payment should be rendered with European markets. This perception and animosity continues in light of its continued support of UN sanctions against Iraq and recent support to peacekeeping missions in the Balkans. The most likely cause of European reservation is fear of competition with the Turks, and a profound fear of Turkish freedom of movement within the EU and the potential for migrant flows from Turkey to the other EU states (Winkler 2003, 59).

At the December 2002, Copenhagen Summit, the EU outlined multiple pre-conditions for Turkey's candidacy into the EU to even be considered. The prerequisites included adapting Turkey's democratic standards to match those of Europe; anchoring freedom of expression at the constitutional and legislative levels within the framework of the rulings of the European Court of Justice, which ban the use of force in a free exchange of ideas; abolishing all restrictions on human rights; maintaining the measures essential for the defense of Turkey as a state while guaranteeing far-reaching rights of expression, assembly, and organization; and amending the constitution to provide for EU jurisdiction and the acceptance of established EU laws, regulations, and policies.

Economically, Turkey must reform by lowering inflation; stabilizing the economy, eliminating the great regional differences in Turkey's economic development; implementing a long-term economic incentive program for underdeveloped regions of eastern Anatolia that would open eastern Turkey to an economic market with Europe; carrying out reforms of the Turkish cultural sector that would increase efficiency and reduce its overall total employment in Turkish society to less than 40 percent of the



population; and improve the country's antiquated social security net (von Kyaw 2003, 51).

Turkey's current economy makes EU membership in the near future unlikely. Although far from collapse, the Turkish economy remains plagued by inflation and mismanagement. A financial crisis in November 2000, followed by a more severe crisis in February 2001, were caused by a banking sector plagued by corruption and political favoritism and required an initial bailout by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) of over \$16 billion (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 16).

Some of the problems stem from the early days of the Ottoman Empire, when the Greeks and Armenians managed the banks and businesses while Turks performed manual labor. Upon gaining independence, Ataturk nationalized all businesses and industry and placed inexperienced Turks in executive positions. Political coalitions and infighting are also responsible because of failure to develop long-term economic plans. This, coupled with the deficit from state-subsidized industry, causes a loss of confidence in foreign investment (Dowdown 1996, 38-40). Other challenges of the economy are centered on the \$7 billion a year war against the PKK, devaluation of the lira--almost 65 percent of its value by October 2001--and capital flight during the 1990s (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 16).

The foreign and security policy effects of Turkey's economic crisis could be profound and will shape the country's domestic development and foreign orientation in the near future. Additionally, the economic emergency has had a "reshuffling" effect on Turkish politics and society. The age old divides between religion and secularism have been replaced by new divides over support for the old, established political parties, and

something new (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 17). Finally, the Turkish economic crisis will have an effect on Turkey's key international relationships and the resources for its national security policy. Thus far, the US has supported the IMF bailout of Turkey--a policy shift for the Bush Administration, which has historically steered away from supporting international bailouts--with no strings attached. But US endorsement of requests for further support, which Turkey will undoubtedly need, could very well be closely linked to Turkish support of US policies on Iran, Cyprus and other areas of US-Turkish disagreement ((Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 17).

Although Turkey and the EU entered into a customs agreement on 1 January 1996, Turkey's human rights record; the involvement of the Turkish military in politics; and Turkey's often poor relations with current EU-member Greece have contributed to the EU's reluctance to let Turkey join. In December 1999, the EU decided that Turkey could become a candidate member after Greece ended its long-standing opposition to Turkish membership. Conditions attached to Turkey's candidate status included the stipulation that Cyprus become an EU member without prior resolution of the political dispute there, and that Turkey's dispute with Greece over Aegean territories would be arbitrated by the International Court of Justice. Turkey was also reminded by the EU's foreign policy representative, Javier Solana, of the EU's opposition to the death penalty, a thinly veiled reference to the ongoing drama with the captured leader of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan. Turkey promptly responded by abolishing its death penalty in an August 2002 parliamentary referendum (Gunduz 2003, 49). Turkey is well aware however that substantive talks with the EU will only begin once additional political and economic conditions are met.

In late 2000, the EU agreed to create a “rapid reaction force” consisting of approximately 60,000 troops to be deployed on humanitarian missions, peacekeeping missions, and in crisis situations. Serious concerns remain on the part of the EU member states and non-EU members of NATO about the nature and command structure of this force and its compatibility with NATO. Turkey is also very concerned about the new rapid reaction force using NATO equipment and intelligence assets without Turkey’s input or consent, thus resulting in a loss of Turkish influence (Missiroli 2002, 9-26). By May 2001, NATO and the EU negotiated an agreement by which Turkey has a say and, depending on the situation, a role in the rapid reaction forces’ operations. However, in October 2001, Turkey threatened to block EU access to NATO assets if it is not given full say in all future EU military operations. The EU refused this demand but offered guarantees of “extensive consultations” before embarking on any action close to Turkey’s borders (Missiroli 2002, 9-28).

In November 2001, EU-Turkish relations soured once again, this time again over the EU enlargement process. As the EU enlargement program appeared on track, it looked as if the EU would head toward a collision with Turkey, and Turkey’s membership, over EU accession standards. Today, and despite multiple reforms and amendments to the EU constitution, Turkey still struggles for membership in the organization, a membership most experts agree, Turkey will not see for another 15 – 20 years (Khalilzad, Lesser, and Larrabee 2000, 49).

### Israel

Turkey counters regional pressure from Syria and Greece with a well-established relationship with Israel. Turkey was the first Muslim state to formerly recognize Israel

and today stands as the Jewish state's only regional ally (Chase, Hill, and Kennedy, 1999, 94). The alliance between the two military heavyweights emerged from a shared sense of regional isolation. Turkey's efforts to join the EU have so far been denied, while the Palestinian situation has severely damaged much of Israel's sense of well being with the outside world. Both nations are strong allies of the US but similarly often have differences with Washington.

Israel and Turkey also share security concerns in their respective region. Potential developments in Syria and Iran, as well as the ever-growing threat from ballistic missiles, bring the two nations' defense policies much closer than ever before. For instance, Turkey is eager to garner US approval for Turkey's purchase of the Israeli Arrow missile defense system. Furthermore, in 1996 the two countries signed a military cooperation agreement that sparked regional criticism from all sides. Both countries continue, however, to hold joint military exercises and exchange foreign military sales programs (Gresh 1998, 2-5).

Turkey's close relationship with Israel is viewed by many as a way for Turkey to reinforce the strategic relationship with the US. The Turkish-Israeli relationship allows Turkey to garner Israeli lobbyist influence in support of Turkish interests and supports the US policy desire to develop regional alliances of pro-Western states (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 141).

Despite the close military and economic relationship shared by Turkey and Israel, Turkey has joined much of the world in condemning Israel over the plight of the Palestinians. In August 2001, Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit strongly criticized Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's right-wing cabinet for demanding a total halt to violence as a

condition for resuming talks with the Palestinians. In early April 2002, the Turkish prime minister accused Israel of genocide against the Palestinians. Ecevit also declared that Sharon's administration had chosen the path of occupation and war. He further warned the US that the Bush administration's inactivity was playing into the hands of radical Islamic groups.

### Syria

Disputes with Syria date back to the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which granted the City of Alexandretta (Hatay) to Turkey. Syria recently pressured Turkey from the South by providing support and safe haven to the PKK. Turkey responded with threats of military intervention and threatened to cut off water from the Euphrates River by the Southeast Anatolian Project (GAP). Fearing a combination of military action and restricted water, Syria capitulated and allowed the extradition of PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan (Aykan 1999, 3-8).

Turkey's water projects are a major issue that has either the potential to bring peace and stability to the region or become another source of tension and conflict. Turkey's dam projects on the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers and their tributaries directly affect the water flow to Syria and Iraq, and may have adverse consequences to Jordan and Israel (Schaffenberger 1991, 13). Jordan claims that water alone is an issue that could cause them to go to war. Water is also tied to the Israeli-Syrian peace negotiations over the Golan Heights. Syria's goal is for Israel to withdraw so it can claim the ample water resources available from underground aquifers in the area. Turkey, however, has made it clear that it will sell water to points south but will not subsidize water to Syria in compensation for lost territory to Israel (Williams 2001, 27-40).

Turkey has additional concerns with Syrian missile and WMD programs in addition to the balance of military powers in the region given a Syrian-Israeli conflict. Syria, of all of Turkey's threats, poses the greatest concern for Turkish planners because the Syrians have, in the Turkish perception, both the capabilities and intentions to use their weapons (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 146). As such, Turkish strategists will continue to be wary of Syria's chemical and missile developments. It is currently not clear in what direction the new president, Bashar al-Asad, will take his nation. It is hoped that his education and appeal to the West will facilitate peace with Israel and economic growth for the region to the benefit of Israel, Turkey, and his own country.

### Russia

Historically, Turkey has always perceived Russia as a threat and an adversary. Russian expansionism and the associated advocacy of Slavic nationalism in the Balkans was the principal cause of the loss of Ottoman territory there in the 19th century (Vali 1971, 172-173). In the beginning stages of the Cold War, when the USSR attempted to gain control of the Bosphorus Straits and the Turkish provinces of Kars and Ardahan, only served to reinforce these feelings (Vali 1971, 180-183).

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the lessening somewhat of their influence in Central Asia and the Caucasus, have led Turkey to expand its influence in those regions. This, in turn, has sparked new political rivalries between Ankara and Moscow that are tempered, only somewhat, by new economic markets between the two nations and promising prospects for new cooperation (Sezer 2000, 92-115).

In the last decade, Russia has become Turkey's second largest trade partner. Russia supplies the vast majority of Turkey's natural gas supplies, while Turkish construction firms have substantial investments in Russia (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 112-113). But change is not only evident on the economic front.

Politically, the two nations have attempted, whenever possible to steer clear of contentious regional interplay. Turkey, despite close historic, religious, and cultural ties with Chechnya, has regarded the situation there as an "internal" Russian problem (Larrabee and Lesser, 2003, 113). For their part, the Russians have declined from playing the "Kurdish card" as was common practice in the Cold War. Both the Turks and Russians seem to have realized the benefit of not supporting separatism. All is not perfect between the two countries however.

Turkey, and the US for that matter, remains leery of Moscow's intentions in the Caucasus, especially in Armenia where the Russians have strong military to military ties. The Russians have supplied the Armenians with MIG-29 fighters and S-300 missiles, which are now deployed at Gyumri, one of Russia's two bases in Armenia (Larrabee and Lesser, 2003, 114).

In Georgia, the Russians have supported separatist movements in both Abkhazia and South Ossetia going as far as granting Russian citizenship to residents in those areas (Nodia 2000, 86). This move was understandably viewed by Ankara as Russia's thinly veiled attempt at annexing the two regions (Socor 2002, 6-8). Turkey views Georgia's continued independence as critical in guaranteeing the continued construction viability of the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline and views any move by Georgia back toward Russia with alarm (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 115).

### Turkey's National Interests

Its father Ataturk established Turkey's national interests and foreign policy. His stated goal was "peace at home and peace in the world." His vision was supported by a security policy built around four basic principles tied to security and economic interests: the declared promise against an aggressive hegemonic intent beyond its borders; strong internal defense and protection of sovereign borders by maintaining a professional army; regional security alliances and cooperation; and international acceptance with strong ties to the West (Mayall 1997, 38-40).

Turkey's current national interest remains consistent with those stated by Ataturk in the 1920s. The vital security interests today remain the preservation of national and territorial integrity, maintenance of secularism, and friendly relations with neighbors. The most vital security interest is to safeguard Kemalism ideology, which is considered the center of gravity of the republic's existence (Heper and Guney 2000, 1-2).

Economic vital interests include maintenance of Western relationships and acceptance of membership into the EU. The current pursuit to build an oil and natural gas pipeline from Baku to Ceyhan is also considered a vital economic and security objective, as Turkey is solely dependent on imported oil (Zurcher 1997, 337-338). Additionally, Turkey holds the key to water resources of the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers, which are critical to the rich agricultural resources of Anatolia and has enormous economic potential for the entire Middle East region. Turkey's GAP and hydroelectric dam construction on the headwaters of these rivers is also defined as a vital economic objective. Historical animosity and a misunderstanding of the potential economic and



security benefits of GAP further exasperates relations with other nations whose survival depends on these rivers.

### Perceived Threats and Opportunities

The Turks have bordered on paranoia for centuries, believing both internal and foreign enemies would weaken and divide Turkey and threaten their survival. Turkey's leadership today continues to define militant Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism within the state as a major threat to the regime. Policy makers also believe that Turkey faces both conventional and transnational threats that seek to disrupt her territorial sovereignty either with conventional forces across Turkey's borders or from terrorist and unconventional infiltration with outside support from hostile governments. Their most dangerous scenario is a combination of both threats simultaneously, sparked by a regional or ethnic conflict. Although state-sponsored enemies include Russia, Iraq, and Iran, Turkey is most concerned with Greece and Syria (Hickok 2000, 2-4). The Aegean Islands could serve as a foothold for another Greek invasion of Turkey or threaten the Port of Ismir (Aydin 1999, 9-10). As outlined above, the worst case would involve a Greek attack in conjunction with Syrian pressure from the south by ground or missile attack or through support to insurgencies.

### Turkey's New National Security Strategy

Turkey's military and civilian leadership is currently attempting to build consensus for a new national security strategy. Its current national military strategy remains structured around Cold War and NATO requirements. Accordingly, the Turkish Army and Air Force would defend in depth with a planned counterattack to block an armor and mechanized penetration in the east and south. Army and police forces would

be committed to conduct counterinsurgency operations and protect key facilities and infrastructure. The Navy's mission is to defend the Straits and prevent coastal infiltration (Hickok 2000, 3). Although this current strategy is conducted only within Turkey's borders, indications are that Turkey's new strategy may be moving in a direction that advocates modernization of the military with a capability to conduct operations beyond her territorial borders. Former Chief of the General Staff General Huseyan Kivrikoglu made comments as late as 2000 that it was imperative for Turkey "to develop capabilities for forward engagement and forward defense and be prepared to preempt threats before they cross into Turkish territory" (Hickok 2000, 4). Turkey's formal military training and education agreement with Israel in February 1996 was the first step toward military modernization and was based on the belief that "... both secular-democratic countries face the same strategic threats" (Hickok 2000, 3).

In 1998 Turkey's National Security Council published a White Paper on security policy that stressed modernization of the military, and appropriated \$150 billion on defense over thirty years. Additionally, this policy stressed the importance of modernizing and moving from a littoral to blue water navy capability in order to deter future aggression, especially from the vulnerable Aegean. Turkey is also looking for potential sellers of modern frigates and submarines in order to protect its commercial trade routes in the Aegean and Mediterranean. This will become even more critical with the planned Ceyhan oil pipeline terminal. As part of the 1996 Israeli Security Cooperation agreement, Turkey plans on purchasing main battle tanks, and surface to air missiles from Israel, and awarded contracts for Israel to modernize Turkey's aging F-4 and F-5 fleet of aircraft (Gresh 1998, 4-5).

Although it is apparent that Turkey is searching for a coherent national security strategy, all will be in vain unless Turkey makes a concerted effort with reforms in human rights and Kurd issues that, in turn, will make it easier domestically for the US to reengage and assist in support of US national interests.

### United States Interests

Prior to the end of the Cold War, the United States was actively engaged in assisting Turkey with its security and economic development. The Reagan and Bush administrations promised additional support, to include compensation for its economic loss while supporting the Gulf War. Both Administrations understood Turkey's importance as a means of keeping Russia in check, as well as countering Islamic fundamentalism. Turkey was also expected to establish solid relationships with Egypt and Israel and provide stability to the peace process. The Clinton administration, however, was focused on domestic problems, and, combined with human rights abuses reported during their campaign against the PKK, Turkey lost military aid and promised economic assistance (Mayall 1997, 92-93). Without US financial backing, Turkey then aligned itself with Israel in order to enhance its strategic importance in the eyes of the West and to take advantage of economic opportunities.

Prior to OIF, the US policy with Turkey was based on a five point agenda of shared interests agreed upon by President Clinton and Prime Minister Ecevit in 1999. Security interests were defined as strengthening security ties; collaborating for regional stability; and reducing Aegean and Cyprus tensions with Greece. The two nations agreed to the economic interests of strategic energy cooperation and boosting of trade and investment opportunities (US Department of State 2002, 13). The US has assisted Turkey

economically through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, and established a Joint Economic Commission in 1993, which resulted in the US becoming one of Turkey's largest export markets (US Department of State 2002, 12-13). The US has also attempted to gain a foothold for Turkey's membership in the EU and was successful in influencing Turkey's acceptance to the Customs Union in December 1995. Despite Turkey's membership in the Council of Europe and the European Economic Community (EEC), issues concerning human rights and Greek veto power continue to block its entrance into the EU (Mayall 1997. 93-94).

Recent events, specifically those concerning Iraq are changing US interests within, and US interaction with Turkey, and accordingly, how Turkey interacts with the US. The diplomatic impasse symbolized by the 1 March 2003 "no" vote by the Turkish parliament symbolizes best the changing dynamic between the two countries and, as it probably signaled a significant shift in the US-Turkish strategic partnership as it had been known, is a valuable period to study.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM NEGOTIATIONS

In November 2002, political conditions looked rosy for Turkish-American cooperation in OIF. The AKP had just won the majority of seats in the country's parliamentary elections that very month and AKP boosters in Europe and the United States presented the party as combining Islam, a sincere appreciation for Westernism and democracy, and well-publicized enthusiasm for close relations with the United States. This was in sharp contrast with the Ecevit government, which had combined a secularist left-of-center party with an ultra-nationalist party that repeatedly expressed apprehension towards Iraqi regime change. Along with the new, pro-West Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) Chief of Staff, General Hilmi Özkök, indicators were strong that the US could count on the Turks for strong support of US foreign policies (Singh 2003, 3).

At first glance, then, the failure of the US-Turkish alliance to materialize occurred when circumstances seemed ideal for success. Several other significant factors, however, undermined the seemingly prime conditions. Large sectors of the Turkish population --upwards of 95 percent in some polls--felt Turkey's economy and security had been undermined by American approaches to Iraq since 1990; a consensus of Turkey's political elite looked at new US invasion plans with obvious distaste; the AKP government had run on an antiestablishment platform and was still quite new--less than six months--to power; the AKP lacked its own team of foreign policy professionals who were comfortable working within the Turkish political-military bureaucracy; AKP officials confronted an exceedingly congested domestic and international agenda, including a bleeding Turkish economy, drawn out negotiations over EU entrance, and

Cyprus reconciliation; and European and Middle Eastern countries were sending Ankara discouraging signals on Iraq (Singh 2003, 3-5). Added to this, the AKP government itself was not on a firm footing. The party leader, R. Tayyip Erdogan, was forced to work between the president, the court system, and the military in an effort to remove a ban preventing him from entering parliament--Erdogan was convicted of sedition in 1998 for reading an “inflammatory” Islamic poem at a Virtue Party gathering. This left only the AKP Prime Minister, Abdullah Gül, and the Foreign Minister, Yasar Yakis, as “decision-making stand-ins,” and they with unclear authority (Singh 2003, 3). But there were other factors at work as well.

First and foremost, the TAF distrusted the AKP, which found its origins in two political parties subsequently outlawed for their militant Islamic activism. Chief of the General Staff, General Özkök, reportedly warned the newly assembled AKP cabinet “the armed forces will continue to devote all of its attention to protecting secularism” (Pipes 2003, 2). Hence the TAF did not welcome the prospect of the AKP receiving support in Washington. Turkish generals preferred the AKP to lose face either for making an unpopular decision to cooperate with the United States plans, or for rejecting the American request and forfeiting the significant diplomatic and financial rewards cooperation would most likely bring (Pipes 2003, 2).

An additional factor was that Turkey's military elite was still surprisingly preoccupied with Northern Iraq and its large population of Kurds. After a ten-year war against the PKK, during which the terrorists found refuge in Northern Iraq, the TAF's single most important priority was to prevent destabilization of the region spilling over

into southeastern Anatolia--the war against the PKK was Turkey's own “war on terror,” overshadowing all other political-military considerations (Çagaptay 2002, 1).

Ultimately, these factors--repeatedly expressed Turkish misgivings; AKP preoccupation with basic domestic political needs with regards to their constituency and the elites of Turkish bureaucratic and military power; and the TAF attitude towards the AKP and, possibly more importantly, the situation in Northern Iraq--made the United States' request to deploy 50,000-90,000 personnel in Turkey nearly impossible for the new Turkish government to fulfill (Singh 2003, 3-5). As the diplomatic pressure and intensity grew on Turkey to concede to US demands, the new AKP government viewed US negotiations as either hardball tactics inappropriate to a strategic partnership, or as proof that Turkey was so indispensable to US plans that the AKP could hold out for the most optimal terms. This, in turn, led to American accusations that Turkey was being an unfriendly haggler, inadvertently strengthening the faction within the AKP who wanted to reject US demands outright and who could fall back on intense popular opposition to the impending US operations as justification for refusing to cooperate (Singh 2003, 3). Furthermore, American diplomats, by requesting the TAF curtail its own Northern Iraq operations so as to secure Iraqi Kurdish cooperation during and after the war, made it quite difficult for the Turkish Army to aggressively support cooperation through the TNSC with the US. American efforts to balance commitments to their disparate regional allies--the Turks and the Iraqi Kurds--simply reinforced Turkish suspicions going back to 1991 about American goals. The TAF, then, came to see alliance with America as nothing more than the less painful step on an ill-advised path (Parris 2002, 3).

### The Diplomatic timeline

On 25 February 2003, the TNSC forwarded a bill to the Turkish Parliament concerning support for upcoming US military operations against Iraq. The bill, although outlining the requirements for Turkish support to the US effort, lacked a positive endorsement from the TAF service chiefs--an anomaly since normally the combined service chiefs clearly articulate TAF preferences for the parliament to consider. The bill authorized the entry of 62,000 US troops into Turkey. The task organization included the 4th Infantry Division, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, 255 fixed wing and 65 rotary wing aircraft, unspecified special operations units, combat support, and combat service support units (Salmoni 2003, 3). The bill also authorized limited TAF deployment into Northern Iraq, given US concerns. On 1 March 2003, the Turkish Parliament voted upon the bill. It earned support from a large number of parliament members, but not an absolute majority. American-Turkish strategic cooperation failed to materialize by four votes.

The 1 March vote was nearly eight months in the making, with a significant number of key chronological waypoints. For analysis, the eight-month negotiation period is broken down into three phases. Phase I runs from July to November 2002 and focused on US efforts to convince Turkish military and political leaders of the necessity and viability of America's plans to invade Iraq and the Turkish leadership's efforts to convince the US not to invade. Phase II encompasses December 2002 - January 2003. During this period, US diplomats continued their efforts to woo the new AKP government. Stall tactics by the Turks and mistrust on both sides gradually replaced initial signs of Turkish cooperation. Phase III covers the period February 2003 – March



2003. This timeframe is characterized by increasing pressure from the US on Turkey to make a decision, coupled with Turkish periods of hedging and further stalling. Phase III culminates with the “no” vote from the Turkish Parliament.

#### Phase I

On 14 July 2002, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and US Undersecretary of State Paul Grossman met Turkish officials in Ankara to outline the US plans for targeting Iraq and to garner Turkish support and cooperation. Even at this early juncture, Prime Minister Ecevit did not react positively instead citing his concerns that Turkey could suffer significant economic damage by supporting the US and that the entire operation could significantly destabilize the Kurdish situation in the region. Ankara estimates it lost more than \$30 billion in trade revenue with Iraq, as well as significant tourist revenue, during the Gulf War and follow-on sanctions (Labott 2002, 1). To add to the diplomatic pressure, in Oct 2002, US Air Force General Joseph Ralston, Commander in Chief, NATO, and US Army General Tommy Franks, Commander in Chief US Central Command, visited Ankara to discuss with both political and military leaders possible Turkish roles in the upcoming operation. Despite this visit, PM Ecevit again publicly snubbed the US advances, remarking, “We are advising that [the US] abandon the idea” (Fisher 2002, 4).

On 3 November 2002, the AKP ascended to power in Turkey capturing 34.2 percent of the vote and 363 of the 550 seats in the Turkish parliament (Çagaptay 2002, 42). Although the newly elected senior leaders in the party expressed reservations about the US war plans, referring instead to the importance of UN legitimacy, the new Turkish government leaders publicly stated their commitment to the United States (Singh 2003,

3). At the same time, the newly selected Chief of the General Staff, General Özkök, departed for consultations in the United States concerning Turkey's possible role in the war. General Özkök stated that "a peaceful solution to the Iraq problem must be pursued.... but if a military operation proves unavoidable, it must be undertaken on internationally legitimate grounds"(Yackley 2002, A-14).

## Phase II

In early December, Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz and Ambassador Grossman made an official request to the Turkish government for use of its territory to stage US military operations against Iraq. The request included the use of Turkish air space and military bases; the use of Turkish territory and ports; and a Turkish commitment of 35,000 troops (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 14). The initial Turkish response seemed not only promising, but also optimistic. Turkish Foreign Minister Yakis stated that Turkey would "cooperate with the US because it is a big ally and we have excellent relations" (Yackley 2002, A-14). Yakis' additional announcement that Turkey would allow use of airbases in war resulted in one US official remarking, "this is the green light we've been waiting for" and even Wolfowitz himself "confidently predicted" Turkey would help the US efforts (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 14). But unfortunately for the US, all was not as it seemed. Turkish sources continued to voice concerns about a war's possible financial damage citing, in no small part, the "unfulfilled" US promises from the 1990-91 Gulf War (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 166). There were additional concerns about the exact number of US troops to be allowed into Turkish territory and the scope of TAF operations that would be required, or more importantly, allowed into Northern Iraq. A Pew Poll at this time indicated eighty-three percent of Turks opposed any Turkish role in

war (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 16). The Turkish Foreign Ministry quickly backtracked, stating that Yakis expressed his personal opinion only and not the official stance of the Turkish government. Prime Minister Gül went one step further and stated that Turkey had committed to nothing (Singh 2003, 2). Despite this, Secretary Wolfowitz stated immediately after his early December 2000 visit to Ankara, “Turkish support is assured” (Lobe 2002, 2).

On 10 December, in an effort to show US support for the AKP as both the legitimate leaders in Turkey and for the Turkish EU membership effort, President Bush invited the AKP party leader, Erdogan to the White House (Lobe 2002, 1). While the invitation was a veiled move to elicit Turkish commitment to war, it had the negative effect of alienating the leadership of the TAF, a situation the US could ill afford in its negotiations (Wallace 2002, 15).

The US-Turkish negotiations continued for the rest of December, when the first real indications by the Americans began to emerge that they were having difficulty gaining Turkish support. Turkish complaints continued to grow as well. The Turkish government complained that the process was moving too fast and that the US “is reading us wrong. It is not a matter of \$1 billion or \$2 billion--we do not feel comfortable with this war” (Peters 2002, 2). Additionally, the Turks restated their position that a commitment of Turkish support before any United Nation’s deliberation on the situation was premature and would not be forthcoming (Singh 2004, 2). Meanwhile, the US advocacy for Turkey’s membership efforts into the EU fell on deaf ears at the December 2002, Copenhagen Summit further undermining the US’s boasts about their influence. (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 16). Finally, wild reporting began to misrepresent the positions

of both negotiating partners. Exaggerated reports put US troop requests ranging from fifteen to ninety thousand troops and Turkish demands from \$4 billion to \$30 billion (Singh 2003, 1).

In early January 2003, there was a major slow down in negotiations. The Turkish government continued to signal the importance of both a positive parliamentary and UN vote, as per Article 92 of the Turkish Constitution, before the US could operate out of Turkish territory. Prime Minister Gül traveled to the Middle East on a “peace offensive,” emphasizing his government’s goal of reducing or eliminating the need for war by convincing the Iraqis to disarm voluntarily. Increasingly, Bush Administration and DoD officials voiced their growing frustration with the Turkish leadership, referring to the process as a “marketplace of how much the Turks can squeeze out of this by whingeing and whining” (Vivk 2003, 3). The US concerns were formalized in a “blunt letter” from Secretary Wolfowitz to Prime Minister Gül. At the same time, senior Turkish generals complained that “even the worst decision is better than indecision,” referring to both the American insistence on Turkish cooperation and, more importantly, their own government’s indecision and inaction (Caralan 2003, 2).

On 20 January, the US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, USAF General Richard Myers, traveled to Ankara to try and reduce the tension. Myers remarked during his stay that, “any idea that [the US] is impatient, or that we're making demands here, is not the case” (BBC Online, 2003). During Myers’ visit, Foreign Minister Yakis indicated a renewed readiness on the part of the Turks to allow US forces into the country, but for only fifteen thousand US troops. Turkish reluctance was not completely absent during Myers’ visit, however. AKP leader Erdogan highlighted during Myers’ stay the

insufficiency of US offers of aid--at this point only \$2 billion in grants and two billion in loans--considering the ongoing economic crisis in Turkey. On 31 January, following closely on the heels of Myers' visit, the TNSC called for a parliamentary vote on the proposed US deployment in Turkey and the subsequent Turkish deployment into Iraq in accordance with the constitution. Glaringly absent, however, was a TNSC-proposed date for the vote (Caralan 2003, 2).

### Phase III

Beginning in early February, conditions for a positive US outcome began to emerge. Prime Minister Gül returned from his Middle East tour and was met by a diplomatic blitz by US officials, who convinced him to ultimately agree to a modified vote on a limited deployment of US personnel to upgrade Turkish command, control, and communications (C3) capabilities. A parliamentary vote quickly followed the Gül's endorsement and the Turkish government authorized the US C3 upgrade teams. Immediately after the vote on 18 February, Economic Minister Ali Babacan and Foreign Minister Yâkış visited Washington for final negotiations on the US aid package (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 25). Official Turkish statements emphasized the need to convince the Turkish Parliament through a large aid package. The US offered \$6 billion in grants and twenty billion in loans, in return for Turkey permitting upwards of 40,000 US troops into Turkish territory. The Turkish request was significantly more than the US offer, reportedly thirty-two to \$40 billion, most in grants. The divide between the negotiating parties again seemed to be widening. It was also during this period that several NATO member states rejected US requests to transfer anti-air assets to Turkey for that country's defense, should hostilities begin (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 20).

The week of 18–25 February saw the AKP government involved in intense bartering with the US. Negotiations centered on the size of the American aid package; the numbers and legal status of US troops in Turkey; the extent of TAF deployment in Northern Iraq; the status of Kurdish Peshmerga or ruling authority; and clarification of any and all guarantees for Iraqi Turkmen. The US, trying to speed the process, set several agreement deadlines, all of which the partners failed to meet. In anticipation of a positive result, the first elements of the US 4th Infantry Division arrived off the Turkish coast with a further thirty-five ships en route (Smith 2003, 4). On 20 February, Bush asked Ambassador Pearson to convey the following message to Turkey: “Turkey and the US have a historical task to fulfill. We will be disappointed if Turkey does not undertake the role assigned to it by history.” Bush also sent a written message to Turkey: “You will have to pay the cost of rejecting our conditions” (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 26).

On 25 February, the Turkish cabinet forwarded a cooperation agreement to Parliament, ending what an unattributed US official called “a bizarre Ottoman-style carpet shop haggle” (Smith 2003, 4). Unfortunately for the US, however, the agreement was wholly inadequate. As written, the agreement was incomplete on several technical, financial, and military issues. It turns out that the Turkish Government too was “not satisfied with the agreement,” but decided, due to the pressure from the US, to forward it on anyway (Smith 2003, 4).

On 1 March 2003, the Turkish NSC met to discuss the impending parliamentary vote. The meeting of the service chiefs adjourned without a firm recommendation on the bill, virtually dooming any chance of success the agreement may have had. Ultimately, the Turkish Parliament voted 264-251 in favor, with nineteen abstentions, which meant

the measure was neither rejected nor adopted. According to Article 96 of the Turkish constitution, which reads in relevant part “the Turkish Grand National Assembly ... shall take decisions by an absolute majority of those present” (Cutler 2003, 2). In light of this provision, and taking account of the 19 abstentions, the speaker Bülent Arınç declared that in fact an absolute majority of those present had not voted in favor and that the motion was therefore not adopted (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 27).

### The Causal Effects

Following the failed US-Turk negotiations over OIF, American military and political officials articulated several criticisms regarding their counterparts in Ankara: First, was the obvious inexperience of the AKP government. AKP's excessive party political focus prevented them from seeing the advantages in the domestic arena that a significant foreign policy success could bring. Additionally, The AKP administration misread the significance of many critical events including President Bush's unprecedented invitation to AKP leader Erdogan to visit Washington. Further, the AKP often misinterpreted the intent of US aims, exaggerated, either innocently or purposefully, Turkey's own geostrategic importance to the US plans, and consistently displayed persistent inability to make a decision or meet deadlines. This indecisiveness, to the detriment of the AKP, extended into their own public relations realm. For instance, AKP leaders consistently failed to clearly articulate to the Turkish people that it was in the country's best interests to assist the US. Finally, the AKP failed to aggressively engage the Turkish media and thus lost the information campaign for the “hearts and minds” of their own populace (Lacey 2003, 6).

The second causal factor of the diplomatic failure cited by the US was the glaringly obvious inaction on the part of the TAF. The military-dominated TNSC did not live up to its role as supreme go-between on matters of Turkish national security, preferring instead to let the AKP navigate international and foreign policy regions of which the AKP was entirely unfamiliar. In short, the TAF abdicated its responsibility, and its here-to-fore assumed role, of dictating to the new AKP leaders what was in the greatest strategic interests of the country (Singh 2003, 5). US officials, along with several analyses of their regional experts, claimed that by not indicating its desires to the AKP, the TAF forfeited much of the prestige it held, not only in Turkey but also in the international arena. Additionally, US officials put much of the responsibility for the diplomatic failure squarely on the shoulders of the TAF claiming that it was the TAF, and not the AKP, who are ultimately responsible for damaging US-Turk relations. At a minimum, the army's endorsement of the cooperation agreement, either positive or negative, would have permitted the AKP civilians the necessary cover with the Turkish people to justify their vote (Singh 2003, 4).

The third causal factor for the failure of negotiations in late 2002 to early 2003 can simply be attributed to the Turkish government's failure to act, as fully expected, as an ally of the US. A consistent American complaint after 1 March 2003 was that Turkey failed to reciprocate for fifty years of US support. A strategic partnership, like the US believed they had with Turkey, required active assistance, especially when the US was offering Turkey such great rewards. Instead of acting like an ally or strategic partner, Turkey responded by offering only conditions that indicated a lack of trust and



substantially complicating the Americans' next step in the war on terror. Three interrelated issues are worth further study to illuminate this point (Singh 2003, 1).

First, while US vessels carrying the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division were loitering off the Turkish shore awaiting a decision by the Turkish government, the AKP was raising their price for cooperation, thus changing the spirit of the process. These tactics were viewed sarcastically by the US as, "Turkey doing its utmost in the War on Terror" (Lacey 2003, 5). Second, insistence by the AKP that the Turkish constitution required UN and, or, international legal endorsement prior to a parliamentary vote was simply not true and was viewed by many as a negotiating smokescreen. Although these "requirements" could have been waived (as they had been in the past) the AKP used them to simply avoid making a tough decision. Finally, by traveling around in fruitless summitry and inviting senior Iraqi officials to Ankara for consultations, PM Gül wasted precious time--even when US intent was clear (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 28).

### The AKP

Going into the negotiating process in November, US diplomats assumed that Turkey would cooperate with US policymakers. The fact that, historically from North Korea to Afghanistan, Turkey had supported US operations served only to cement this opinion. This fact, combined with the assumption that Turkey had so much to gain from cooperation with the US, and too much to lose from non-cooperation, had the confidence levels of US officials' very high. At least initially then, the US view was that the AKP was moderate, and supported US policies in the Muslim world (Çagaptay 2002, 2).

American diplomatic experiences with Turkey in the 1980s and 1990s also suggested that Turkish political parties were oligarchies and that they expected, and

normally received, total allegiance from their respective members of parliament (MPs). Those same experiences showed that the Turkish military would normally drive the decision making process on all issues of strategic concern and finally, that the TAF was well informed and supportive of the US plans for Iraq. In assessing the new Turkish government however, US policy makers may have listened to the wrong Turkish experts, who advocated for a November 2002 victory for AKP and who downplayed real and potential disagreements between the AKP and the US (Pipes 2003, 1). American journalist Robert Kaplan even proposed that the AKP could “usher in an Islamic version of the Protestant Reformation,” leading to a general turn toward liberalism in the Middle East. Kaplan also raised the possibility that the AKP in power could benefit Americans by widening popular Turkish support for alliance with the United States (Pipes 2003, 2). US officials failed to alter their initial assumptions, even though on both the civilian and military level new dynamics drove the requirement for significant reevaluation.

Unlike earlier Turkish political parties, AKP leaders were unable to exercise oligarchic control. The AKP party was, and still is, a diverse mix of people associated with various elements of Turkish Islamism (White 2002, 12). Yet, this new political beginning, decidedly distinct from Turkey's other major parties from the 1950s-1990s, lessened the ability or even desire of party leaders to control their constituency in and out of parliament. Some AKP MPs--perhaps as high as 30%--were holdovers from the more uncompromisingly Islamist and anti-US Refah Party (banned in 1998) (Pipes 2003, 3). The Parliamentary Speaker Arinc himself already had an unfriendly reputation among US diplomats from previous encounters and he and his associates viewed a close relationship

with America as nothing more than a continuance of the political and economic servitude of the last fifty years.

From the start, these hard-line MPs worried that the moderate Erdogan and Gül would sacrifice party interests. Their negative vote, then, was a way to keep the party on track (Mahalli 2003, 16). Conversely, PM Gül and his followers were pragmatists. While not wanting to alienate the United States, their strong ideological perception of Turkey as a Muslim nation made them reluctant to appear to be the US' regional policeman. Until mid-February, PM Gül, in particular, misread clearly communicated American intentions. Beyond a domestic-economic agenda, the AKP government articulated no concrete strategic vision, and never achieved any foreign policy momentum from November 2002 to March 2003. AKP inexperience proved telling. The principal Turkish political appointees had never held their jobs before, and had little time to learn how to navigate in the complex arena of foreign policy. Rather, at key junctures in negotiations with the US, the AKP government found internal economic, political, and party challenges all competing for their attention.

Party Leader Erdogan, though hoping to minimize damage to AKP-US relations, had as his major goal getting into parliament and becoming PM. Domestic objectives were uppermost in his mind including safeguarding the popularity of the AKP, preventing a rupture in the relationship between the AKP and the Turkish military that could lead to AKP's illegalization, and preserving his own leadership in the AKP--this amounted to a preventive strategy that prevented a Refah hijacking of AKP. More broadly, the AKP government simply did not want war, pursuing instead a “maybe it'll go away approach” (Kristianasen 2003, 28).

### AKP Misinterpretations

The 10 December 2002, White House invitation to Erdogan was extraordinary. Still an un-elected and illegal politician, he was treated by the Bush Administration as the presumptive leader of Turkey and cared for as such during his first state visit. Erdogan, however, completely missed the value of strong endorsement by President Bush fixating instead on domestic issues at home. The PM completely misinterpreted how such an endorsement from President Bush could have strengthened Erdogan in the AKP, in parliament, in Turkey's domestic politics, and more than likely even regionally. Instead, unlike the elder Bush-Özal common vision of the 1990-91 Gulf War campaign, Erdogan appeared surprised by the US approach to Iraq. Erdogan lacked his own strategic vision, missing totally the implications of the US approach for what Turkey would ultimately have to do, especially in Northern Iraq (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 25). Erdogan returned to Turkey naively believing the AKP could prevent the war, preserve its domestic standing, and finesse US-Turkish relations.

### Mixed Signals

From the moment they assumed power, the new AKP government displayed a certain distrust of the US and Turkish foreign policy. In particular they did not see the policy as their own, viewing it instead as distinctly secular and oriented on a Western model. Early on, AKP officials stopped using the embassy as a conduit channel in both the United States and Turkey, choosing instead to forward communiqués from a wide variety of unofficial people they knew personally as semi-authorized go-betweens. Despite the fact, Turkish Ambassador Logoglu in Washington was a professional diplomat respected by his US counterparts, back channel, parallel communication made

US officials wonder who was in charge, and, more importantly, whose messages really counted (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 24-30).

### The Turkish Military

Turkey, and for that matter many other nations, attempted to put a good face on the 1 March vote, heralding it as democracy in action--civilians made a parliamentary decision based on an evaluation of public sentiment, without the military intimidation so omnipresent in past Turkish politics. The leader of the Turkish Republican People's Party (RPP)--the sole opposition party in the Turkish parliament--remarked after the vote that, "Turkey is a democratic country and everybody that appreciates the functioning of the true democracy should appreciate this [vote]" (Singh 2003, 1-2). Remarkably, even Arab and Greek analysts concurred. In sharp contrast, US officials expressed vocal disappointment that the TAF had not exercised "the strong leadership role that we would have expected," by dictating a yes vote to the AKP (Lacey 2003, 4). Secretary Wolfowitz provided perhaps the harshest critique immediately after the vote when he remarked during a CNN interview, "Let's have a Turkey that steps up and says, 'We made a mistake, we should have known how bad things were in Iraq, but we know now. Let's figure out how we can be as helpful as possible to the Americans.' I'd like to see a different sort of attitude than I have yet detected" (Singh 2003, 1). Why did the Turkish military pass up the opportunity to cement security relations with the United States in a fashion guaranteeing increased military assistance and influence on the post-Saddam security regime in Northern Iraq?

From the mid 1990s, the TAF had tremendous misgivings about US plans in Northern Iraq, particularly regarding the Kurds. Northern Iraq was still considered by the

TAF as part of southeastern Anatolia, and US actions during Operation Provide Comfort in the Iraqi Kurdish safe haven aided anti-Ankara Kurds affiliated with the PKK. The PKK had conducted an insurgency in southeastern Turkey until 1999, where it faltered but only after thousands of casualties, reciprocal brutality, and finally PKK attrition and the capture of their leader Abdullah Öcalan (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 133-136). The fact that Öcalan had been hosted by the Greek embassy in Kenya prior to his capture only served to highlight that Turkey's Kurdish problem had also become a Turkish vulnerability when dealing with Greece, Syria, and even Iran. Likewise, the conflict was economically catastrophic, consuming so much of the military budget as to prevent long-overdue force restructuring and modernization (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 136).

US diplomats failed to calm the TAF concerns that this no-win situation would not reemerge. In the run-up to war, American discussions of joint military operations and meetings with Iraqi Kurdish opposition groups--some of whom had intermittently condoned PKK actions in the 1990s--was operationally sensible but it significantly dampened TAF enthusiasm to sign onto southeastern Turkey becoming an American combat corridor (Gencsoy and Dahl 2004, 19-25). Likewise, US demands to limit the TAF deployment in Iraq out of consideration for the Kurds and recommendations that TAF units be subject to overall US C2, were all exceedingly unappealing to TAF commanders (Bowcott and Harding 2003, 6).

That said, the Turkish General Staff, especially the service chiefs on the TNSC did not clearly urge the government to say yes, or no, early or often enough. Other than the economic reasons cited, all the other misgivings discussed above could not be sidestepped (Singh 2003, 3). Also, while the TAF has a long and sordid history of

undoing civilian governments, either directly or indirectly--1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997-98--the TAF had been able to cite convincing domestic security concerns or the clear support of influential sectors of the public. Given the total opposition to war in Iraq among the Turkish public, a TAF or TAF-directed TNSC edict to the AKP would have undermined the army's prestige, and may have increased the popularity of the Islamist ruling party (Singh 2003, 3). Conversely, a yes vote without military pressure could have injured the AKP, a goal of the secularist army.

### Conclusions

Several significant dynamics emerged from the eight-month diplomatic effort between the US and Turkey. First, although serious consultations between the two parties did not begin until after the AKP victory in November 2002, events from July of that year had already formed an environment hostile to US interests. Next, the periods of US-Turkish negotiations, although intermittent and intense, were not consistent enough to avoid Turkish-initiated slow-downs and hedging. Third, the negotiations were made exceedingly complex by secondary and tertiary issues, including Turkish domestic politics, EU negotiations, debates within NATO, and Prime Minister Gül's Middle East summit trip. Fourth, inflated and sometimes, downright false reports of the negotiating partners' military, political, and economic demands from November 2002 through March 2003 significantly increased the tension between the two parties. Fifth, internal Turkish political dynamics between the AKP and the TAF combined to further impede a positive US outcome. Finally, and possibly most importantly, the US DOD took the negotiating lead throughout the entire process. The State Department was relegated to the role of junior partner in the process, with Secretary Powell and Ambassador Pearson brought in

virtually after the fact and most certainly too late in the process to effect change. Where then, given the outcome of these negotiations, does the relationship between Turkey and the US now go?



## CHAPTER 4

### FUTURE DIRECTION OF US-TURKISH RELATIONS

In November 1999, President Bill Clinton addressed the Turkish General Assembly in Ankara. At that time, he declared Turkey to be a “strategic partner” of the United States. That strategic partnership was based on three elements: First, the emergence, after the end of the Cold War, of a specific set of issues on which US and Turkish interests largely overlapped; Second, an explicit recognition by both sides of that convergence of interest; And third, a realization that, by working together, Turkey and the US were more likely to advance their common interests than by pursuing them separately (Parris, 2003). Only four years after President Clinton’s statement, however, the ruling Turkish AKP could not muster within the Turkish Parliament the votes required to allow US troops onto US Turkish territory for OIF operations. Ever since there has been a debate on both sides of the relationship as to whether or not the US-Turkish “strategic partnership” is dead. To determine the current condition and future viability of the partnership the strategic options open to both countries must be studied.

#### Turkey’s Strategic Options

As discussed in previous chapters, Turkey’s foreign and security policy is currently undergoing redesign. Until this policy is finalized it is unclear which direction the Turkish government will take in regards to international relations. According to Zalmay Khalilzad, Ian Lesser, and Stephen Larrabee writing in *The Future of Turkish-Western Relations: Towards a Strategic Plan*, Turkey has five broad options from which to choose: an European, Eurasian, Middle-Eastern, US, or multidimensional policy route (Khalilzad, Lesser, and Larrabee 2000, 48-50).

In the European option, Turkey focuses its efforts on strengthening its ties with Europe and promoting its membership aspirations in the EU. Turkey, under the AKP leadership, succeeded in accomplishing political reforms geared to, among other things, civilianize the national security institutions, and to comply with the EU's December 1999, Copenhagen Criteria, namely, the rule of law, respect for human rights and advocacy of a free market economy. Several major packages of reforms were passed through the AKP controlled parliament in an effort to bring the present legal system in line with the EU policy (Ozcan 2003, 5). These reforms trimmed the TAF's power over foreign and security policy-making by changing the central status of the TNSC and placing the council under more direct civilian control. But Turkey's reforms are still met with significant ambivalence from the rest of Europe.

The Europeans continue to argue that to safeguard the EU's continued viability, member countries must have a functioning market economy and a robust legal and administrative framework. The member state must be willing to accept the EU's position in its entirety, contribute to reaching the EU's objectives, and implement the Common foreign and Security Policy. Finally, within the framework of political integration, a "common culture" is necessary. In other words, Turkey must accept the basic EU values of parliamentary democracy, the rule of law, social justice, liberty, and respect for human rights (Gunduz 2003, 48-50). All of these reforms take time and the Turkish public might lose patience with the long delay, especially if the reforms require heavy sacrifices and compel Turkey to forgo other policy options deemed to be in the Turkish national interest (Khalilzad, Lesser, and Larrabee 2000, 49).

The second option for Turkey is the Eurasian Option. Here Turkey concentrates on strengthening ties to the newly independent states in Central Asia and the Caucasus. While still aligning itself with the US, Turkey would redefine itself more as a Eurasian power. This option has significant benefits for Turkey, especially in the realm of energy availability, but carries the significant risk of heightening tensions with both Russia and Iran. Russia has already made it known that it is uncomfortable with Ankara's efforts to increase its influence in Central Asia and the Caucasus and increased influence by Turkey in the region could ultimately force a Russian-Iranian pact, something neither Ankara or Washington desires (Winrow 1995, 42).

The next option available to Turkey is the Middle Eastern or Islamic Option. Here, Turkey emphasizes its Islamic heritage and seeks to strengthen its ties with other Islamic states in Asia and the Middle East. Turkey has sixty years of democratic elections, eighty years of secularism, and more than two centuries of modernization under its belt but there are significant moves within the country to move away from its moderate path towards a politization of Islam. Of all the options available to Turkey, this one poses the most problems for not only the West but also the controlling party in Ankara. First, any move to put an overtly Islamic stamp on Turkish foreign policy would be met with strong opposition from the TAF. The Refah party attempted this policy from 1996-1997 and was effectively disposed in a "silent coup" by the TAF. Islamists in the Turkish government today, of which the AKP are the most prominent, learned from the coup that Turkish secularists will fight back hard against an Islamic use of democracy to attack secularist policies; and that in a democracy moderation is more appealing than either extremism or confrontation (Çagaptay 2003, 1). Second, the Turks would be

opposed by the majority of their own “Westernized” elites who dominate the bureaucracy, universities and media (Khalilzad, Lesser, and Larrabee 2000, 50). Lastly, Turkey’s imperial past and emphasis on secularism still causes many countries of the Middle East to look at Ankara with a wary eye. This is not to say that a move towards radical Islam is not a possibility in Turkey just that it is opposed by significant domestic and international dynamics.

Turkey’s fourth strategic option is to aggressively pursue and rebuild its strategic partnership with the US. This option, however idealistic it may be, has been tried before under the Özal government, and was never really successful. The partnership, realized or imagined, is opposed by both the Greek and Armenian lobbies in Washington; viewed with distaste domestically by much of Turkey’s own ruling party, and, with US and Turkey having differing views on many key issues in the Middle East, especially Iraq and Iran, looked on reluctantly by those political and military leaders in Turkey who might otherwise support such a relationship (Parris 2003, 2).

The final Turkish option is a Multidimensional Policy. This option combines elements of the four previously discussed options and allows Turkey to make foreign and security policy decisions based more strongly on Turkish national interests than those of its allies. Ankara would pursue strong relations and ties to the Europe but would avoid the “obsession” with EU membership. In the same way, Turkey would pursue strong bilateral ties to the US but would not seek, or endorse a “broad-based strategic partnership (Khalilzad, Lesser, and Larrabee 2000, 50). At the same time, Turkey would continue to expand its influence into the Caucasus and Iraq even if it conflicted with the policies of Russia, the US, and other states.

This final option, perhaps more than the others, best reflects Turkey's traditional foreign policy pursuits. Prior to World War II, Turkey avoided overt support for any one particular country or alliance and this option would return it to its Kemalist foreign policy roots. This option would also allow Turkey to preserve its traditional relationships while avoiding too much dependence on any one of those same relationships. The draw back to this option is that it Turkey could easily overstretch itself and its meager resources leaving it more isolated in its already troubled and unstable neighborhood. Does Ankara, then, still need a strong US-Turkish relationship? In Turkey's case the answer is yes. Turkey still requires Washington as a global partner when, for instance, it becomes clear that Ankara's membership in the EU is still years, if not decades, away. In the end, Turkey remains a regional power with limited clout outside its neighborhood and thus still needs the US to help safeguard its global interests. But will Turkey prove pivotal enough for the US to influence global interests on Turkey's behalf? An examination of the US strategic options concerning Turkey helps answer this question.

#### US Strategic Concerns

It is not difficult to predict that the US-Turkish relationship is going to be qualitatively different in the future from what it was during the era of the two countries strategic partnership. Surprisingly, however, this change is not necessarily because of the 1 March 2003 vote that denied the US use of Turkish territory for OIF. Instead the change in relationship can be best attributed to the post-OIF environment and the subsequent elimination of the need for Turkey to participate in the US regional containment policy.

Containment of the Soviet Union was, of course, the centerpiece of US foreign policy during the entire Cold War. Turkey was vital in helping contain the USSR and in fixing 24 divisions of the Soviet Army on the Eastern edge of Europe. Following the fall of the Soviet Union, Turkey was still needed to contain Saddam Hussein and his Baathist regime in Iraq. Today, both of those threats are gone. For the future--say the next 20-30 years--there is no foreseeable foe--bar Iran developing a nuclear capability--which Turkey is essential to the US to contain. This is not to say that Turkey's support or participation in US policy in the region will not be useful or important in the future, but it is difficult to envision circumstances today in which Turkey's contribution will be essential in the same sense that it was in containing the USSR and Saddam (Parris 2003, 2). Turkey does remain a strong counter balance to militant Islamic states in the region, and continues to hold extensive political and military clout in the Caucasus, Middle East and Europe however, and the US has several issues it must consider in the region of which Turkey can assist.

First, and similar to the first option for Turkey, US relations with Ankara will be influenced greatly by Turkey's membership status in the EU. Should Turkey eventually be granted membership status, the likely result would be a more European Turkey and greater "normalization and maturity" in relations between the Turkey and the US as has been the pattern across Southern Europe (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 183). If Turkey's EU aspirations stall or fail there will be a greater reliance on Washington by Turkey and, accordingly, more pressure from Washington for Turkey to acquiesce to US policy leads. This could prove uncomfortable for both countries as was demonstrated in the OIF negotiation drama. The US has given Brussels strong indications that it would like the

EU membership process expedited for Turkey but these moves are hampered by Washington's strained relations with Europe over Iraq.

The second area of interest for the US concerns Washington's policy towards Russia. A deterioration of US-Russo relations or the reemergence of Russia as a regional power in the Caucasus and Central Asia would significantly increase the risks for Turkey, and Washington's interest in maintaining strong US-Turk relations. Additionally, Turkish interests in the Middle East, Asia and the Balkans, areas where Russian policies are meaningful and long lasting, could be adversely affected. At least concerning Russia, US and Turkish policies converge and the American connection should remain key to Turkey's deterrent posture in regards to Russia (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 184). A combined policy of engagement and containment of Russia by both the US and Turkey is likely the best approach for both nations, although the containment segment is not nearly as indispensable as Turkey's role was during the Cold War.

Third, energy policy is likely to emerge as the key factor in the US-Turkish relationship. First, and foremost, is Turkey's immense need for energy. Turkey's development, economically, and hence politically within the EU, depends in a large part on Turkey's ability to find an affordable and reliable source of energy. Add to this, America's growing interest in energy security issue, and Turkey's role as a conduit for Middle Eastern and Caspian region energy and the energy factor takes on immense importance. Many Turks see the continued viability of the Baku to Ceyhan pipeline resting on continued or, better yet, enhanced US support. However, that support has been waning recently. A positive step was made with the reopening of the Iraqi-Turkish pipelines, which carry roughly twice that of the proposed Baku-Ceyhan route. Stability in

Iraq then becomes vital, not only to the US, but also to the Turks who require the renewed source of oil and gas (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 184).

US policymakers also have the option of using Turkey's water "monopoly" as a means to stabilize and further integrate many countries of the Middle East. Both Syria and Iraq's late regime believed Turkey used water as a political weapon, which in many cases they did, but proper US intervention on the subject holds promise and could turn this contentious issue into an advantage for the entire region. A recent study conducted by the Harvard Middle East Water Project concluded that making water an economic interest rather than a security interest has potential to integrate and bring nations closer (Mayall 1997, 99-100). The study highlighted that current water agreements stipulated by the Oslo II negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians could become critical by 2010 (Baker Institute 1996, 4-5) Tensions over water will, more than likely continue to worsen and the potential exists that these tensions could lead to war, especially with Syria and Jordan.

Of key interest to both the US and Turkey is further development of the Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) with the eventual intent to provide agriculture irrigation and ample clean water resources to the West Bank, Jordan, and as far South as Saudi Arabia. Syria could also be included in this project should they abandon their state support of terrorism making the GAP an important diplomatic bargaining tool for the both the US and Turkey. While Turkey's GAP water project is causing tension, with its critics claiming it restricts the flow of water along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, a case can be made that GAP is necessary to manage upstream resources that in turn provide agriculture, water, and energy requirements for the entire region. A 1996 study by the



University of Texas concluded that Turkey's GAP will efficiently manage and control highly variant flows and will provide 76 percent of the water to downstream countries. The project has potential to increase the agriculture and industrial productivity of the entire region by approximately five times its current output (Akmansoy 1996, 2). The GAP initiative will also provide employment for the Kurds, which would greatly contribute to stability in Southeast Turkey and along the borders with Syria and Iraq.

Finally, the U.S. can, and should, capitalize on the potential for Turkey to offer water in exchange for peace. Ankara has made it known that it is not interested in subsidizing the peace process, but the late President Özal offered the construction of two water pipelines to divert water directly to Syria, Jordan, Israel, and Saudi Arabia in the name of peace and stability (Mayall 1997, 64). The opportunity exists for the US to negotiate with the Turkish government to dust off the old Özal plan, offering economic and military assistance in exchange for a pipeline for peace project.

The next area of interest for the US concerns the Turkish economic sector. In the fifty year relationship between the US and Turkey, the focus has always remained on strategic versus economic issues between the two countries. While this has often been necessary due to the flavor of Turkish and American policy concerns, persistent instability in regions adjacent to Turkey, and other more natural partners for Turkish business, US policy makers should explore increasing economic vice strategic ties.

US interest in the Turkish market has ebbed and flowed since President Clinton announced the US-Turkish strategic partnership. Growth in both the US and Turkey slowed and the global economy contracted significantly decreasing US investment in Turkish companies. Even attempts by Ankara to revive trade like the January 2002

establishment of a duty-free Qualified Industrial Zone generated little, to no, enthusiasm for investment. Turkey's well-publicized economic problems also posed significant issues for US investment. US policymakers must focus on first, ensuring Turkey's compliance with the IMF "get well plan;" and second, promoting increased investment in the Turkish economy.

The final US area of concern regarding Turkey involves the foundational reasoning behind the US-Turkish strategic partnership. It is likely, the partnership, if it should even continue being referred to as such, will transition from one based on Turkey's geographic position to one of shared transregional concerns (e.g. weapons of mass destruction (WMD), terrorism, missile proliferation, etc.) (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 184-185). There is no doubt that Turkey's size, location and demographics alone are enough to guarantee it a place among the key pivot nations but these factors are no longer enough, by themselves, to ensure Turkey's geostrategic importance to the West.

The future of the US-Turkish bilateral relationship must, first and foremost, reflect a changing Turkey, an evolving foreign policy debate in both the US and Turkey, and, most importantly, a changing strategic environment. The relationship, now more than ever, will be forced to take into account disparate external variables, such as Turkey's relationship with Europe, the evolution of democracy in Iraq, the changing dynamics of the Middle East, and the continued, and potentially growing threat, of WMD, missile proliferation and terrorism.

#### Future of the US-Turkish Bilateral Relationship

The dawning of a new bilateral US-Turkish relationship following OIF should come as no surprise. Turkey is not needed as much for its containment role as in years

past, and Ankara's focus on internal vice international concerns necessitate that changes occur. Three key areas emerge where the US-Turkish relationship will focus in the future: first, is the firm establishment of Turkey as a stable, democratic ally; second, the emergence of Turkey as a positive actor in regional security and development; and third, establishment of Turkey as a contributor to US freedom of action in the region.

The establishment and promotion of democratic ideals in Turkey will dramatically affect the future of the US-Turkish relationship. The West has focused extensively on Turkey's domestic scene, primarily on human rights and the continuing process of democratization. The human rights situation has been the most and probably represents the leading obstacle to a closer and more effective strategic relationship (Khalilzad, Lesser, and Larrabee 2000, 61-62). The issue directly affects Washington's ability to support Ankara with arms sells, aid, and investment when Congress refuses to honor agreements with Turkey based on that country's human rights record. Internationally as well, Turkey's human rights record causes issues with the US, which finds it often difficult to support Ankara for EU inclusion when Turkey retains such an abysmal human rights record.

Domestically, political reform within Turkey, will effect how the US engages Ankara in the future. A stable political environment would allow for a more predictable and less nationalist Turkish foreign policy which, in turn, may allow Turkey to pursue a less aggressive policy vis-à-vis Greece over the Cyprus issue (Khalilzad, Lesser, and Larrabee 2000, 61-63). A stable political environment, combined with adequate economic reforms, would also encourage increased US investment and help fulfill Turkey's promise of being a "big emerging market" (Perle 1999, 3). Conversely, a

tumultuous political and economic environment in Turkey would draw the attention away of Turkey's key actors--as we saw during the OIF negotiations--preventing them from focusing on a more active and positive role in the region. In short, the Turkey that "matters most" to the US is one that has undertaken the economic and political reforms necessary for Turkey to feel confident about its identity and its future in the West and allows Washington and Ankara the opportunity to move toward a more diverse, enhanced strategic relationship. A relationship in which security cooperation is augmented by better trade and investment ties, and regional joint ventures outside the traditional military venues (Perle 1999, 3).

The second focus area for the US-Turkish bilateral relationship is on making Turkey a positive regional actor. Obviously, Washington has a strong stake in encouraging Ankara to assume this role and, at least in terms of broad, regional aims; US and Turkish interests are similar (Blinken 199, 6). Both countries, for instance, speak about the need for peace, stability, and economic development in the Balkans, the Middle East, and Eurasia and with the pressing security challenges from all of these areas, Turkey's strategic relevance, while moderately lessened, is certainly more diverse. Turkish policymakers must now look south, east, and to Europe when determining Turkey's roles in the region and it is this new diversity, which raises the possibility of increased friction points between Ankara and Washington. Turkey's role as a regional power is looked upon favorably by Washington who sees it as a counterbalance to any Russian moves in the region.

The final bilateral focus area for the US and Turkey centers around Washington's desire for Turkey to positively contribute to US freedom of action--in essence, power

projection--in adjacent regions (Khalilzad, Lesser, and Larrabee 2000, 71). Recognition of Turkey as a base for projecting military power has been a feature of US war planners since the Cold War and continued through the Gulf War but has not always been a guarantee. In particular, in October 1996, Ankara did not allow the use of Turkish bases during the Iraqi incursion into the north or for the US Operation Desert Fox.

Looking ahead, the US and Western allies retain great interest in using Turkey's bases and ports for power projection missions into the Caucasus and the Middle East. It is unlikely that this interest is going to wane, even given the 1 March 2003 vote. There are several contingencies in which access to Turkish bases would be necessary for the defense of Turkey's own territory. Although these are NATO responsibilities the forces involved would be largely American.

The future of the US-Turkish bilateral relationship must focus on not taking Turkish interests for granted, as has been the tendency in the past. A new bilateral relationship centered on what is best for, not only Washington, but also Ankara is essential for the growth of both nations. Pushing Turkish political and economic reforms, promoting Ankara as a positive regional actor, and developing strategies supportive of US wishes for freedom of action in the region that do not fly in the face of Turkish concerns are all essential to the evolution of the US-Turkish relationship.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS

Kemal Ataturk inherited a tradition of state power left over from the Ottoman Empire and combined it with a security policy based on a fear of Russia and of alignment with the West. This alignment became the foundation of Turkish foreign and security policy for the next 80 years and is still prevalent in Turkey today. In the last ten years Turkey has emerged as a more active and influential actor in the international arena. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, Turkey began to reestablish its interests from the Balkans to Western China--areas that had been absent from its foreign policy since the forming of the Republic. In the West, especially in the US, there was agreement that Turkey was a significant regional player and pivotal to the aims and strategic policies of the US in the area. Today, however, Turkey is at a crossroads. The argument about Turkey's importance now rests, not solely on its geographic location but on the country's ability to affect a wider area through its foreign policy and internal domestic developments.

The 1 March 2003 vote by the Turkish Parliament was a watershed event but not for the reasons most believe. The vote was more than a hindrance to US war plans it was a symbol of the changing of the US-Turkish bilateral relationship. Although not formally acknowledged by either country, the vote was the precursor to the formal end of the US-Turkish "strategic partnership." Most experts agree the two countries will, of course, continue to remain close allies, but the characteristics of a strategic partnership, namely that there were issues on which US and Turkish interests overlapped; that both sides explicitly recognized that there was a convergence of those interests; and finally the

realization by both nations that, by working together, both countries were more likely to advance their common interests than by pursuing them separately can no longer be assumed.

The US continuance of citing Turkey as its regional model rests on the Ankara's continued stability and highlights only the positive side of the argument about Turkey's political and economic future. But an unstable and impoverished Turkey would have very different and very negative consequences for Europe, the Caucasus, and the Middle East than a Turkey, which was well established. An unstable Ankara has the potential to promulgate several regional dramas. First, an unstable Turkey could significantly encumber further reconstruction in Southeastern Europe, effectively stalling development in that region. Second, a weak Turkey could reinforce the existing instability in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Third, an unstable and unpredictable Ankara would contribute to the deteriorating security environment in the Middle East and would limit Western options in the Gulf region. In all of these cases, Turkey would be a consumer of security rather than the producer both the EU and NATO desire it to be (Larrabee and Lesser 2003, 188). In short, Ankara's internal revolution is likely to be the determinant of the country's foreign and security policy potential and direction.

Turkey has several options through which to pursue its future foreign and security policy. Separate focuses on Europe, Eurasia, the Middle East, the US strategic partnership, or a combination of all four allow Turkey a wide range of options through which to pursue its interests and expand its regional and international stature. Most likely, Turkey will pursue the final option, a combination of relationships with Europe, the

Caucasus, the Middle East, and the US, taking those parts of each relationship that are most beneficial to the Turks themselves.

For the US' part, policymakers must remain engaged with Turkey in areas concerning Turkey's EU aspirations and the Europeanization of Turkey that will most likely result. Secondly, the current geopolitical environment demands the US remain engaged with Turkey as a counterbalance to Russian influence in the Caucasus and Middle East. Third, US policymakers must stay abreast of Turkey's energy and water situation. Energy interests continue to be paramount to the Turkish economy and the multitude of positives that a strong Turkish economy brings, while Turkey's water assets could prove to be the pivotal resource in the region in the next 20 to 30 years. Finally, a positive relationship with Ankara is essential to help counter the emergence of transregional threats such as WMD, terrorism and missile proliferation.

For the benefit of both countries, a new bilateral relationship, focused on the national concerns of both nations is essential for the salvaging of the US-Turkish alliance. There are, in fact, congruent objectives that could provide a strong direction for US-Turkish cooperation for the next 50 years, and it is these objectives which should form the basis of the "new" strategic cooperative relationship between the US and Turkey for the next decades. These include a requirement for global energy security; a need to counter the proliferation of WMD and ballistic missiles; and finally, as a proponent of Russian reform and counterbalance to any emerging Russian threat.

First, and as has already been briefly discussed, is the requirement for energy and the inherent security of that energy. For the US and Turkey, "ensuring the security of energy supplies from the oil-rich Persian Gulf and the Caspian Basin could be adopted as



one specific rationale for alliance” (Khalilzad, Lesser, and Larrabee 2000, 82). The relationship could center on the need to prevent internal or regional conflicts or the domination of the region by a hostile power. Turkey is situated perfectly to play a vital role ensuring security both in the Persian Gulf and in the Caspian Basin and Turkish military facilities provide an excellent location for projecting power to both regions

The second foundation on which the new US-Turkish relationship can be built is on countering the transregional threats of WMD and missiles. Turkey, the US, and Western Europe all have a strong, shared interest in countering the spread of WMD and ballistic missiles and the regions adjacent to Turkey pose one of the greatest challenges to the nonproliferation regime. Ankara’s increasing vulnerability to the threat should act as an incentive for cooperation with the West to either purchase missile defense systems or to invest and embark on the development and employment of systems of their own design.

Finally, Turkey and the US can build upon the requirement to effectively engage an emerging Russian superpower. In this strategy, both the US and Turkey would work together to assist and encourage political and economic reform in Russia while at the same time preparing for any emerging Russian challenges in the region. Both Turkey and the US should aggressively seek to enhance military, economic, and political relations with Russia while simultaneously preparing to deter or counter any Russian expansionism into the Caspian Basin and, or, Central Asia.

Most analysts agree that the “strategic partnership” between the US and Turkey announced by President Clinton on 1 March 1999 has ended and, as such, US-Turkish relations are going to be qualitatively different in the future. The US no longer requires

Turkey, and its key geographic positioning, to contain America's enemies to the level it did during the Cold War or during Saddam Hussein's reign, while Turkey finds itself leaning more towards Western Europe and EU membership than towards the US. Washington will continue to need Turkey to provide useful and important cooperation in the future, but it is doubtful that Turkey's cooperation will be as essential to US plans as it has been in the past. There will be common areas of interest on which the two nations will, and should, actively engage such as the securing of global energy; the counter proliferation of WMD and missiles; and the containment and engagement of Russia, but the number of congruent interest between the two nations has apparently shrunk.

Turkey is a fascinating country, rich in tradition and history and the number of additional topics worthy of study are countless. Through the course of this research two vitally important topics were left unexamined; First, although not within the scope of this thesis, an analysis of the Turkish political reforms currently taking place in Ankara would provide valuable insight into how the Turkish government is crafting its future foreign and security policy strategy; and second, a detailed study of the EU-Turkish debate would prove a fascinating comparison of eastern versus western political thought.

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